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# WANDERINGS AND MEMORIES

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AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

# WANDERINGS AND MEMORIES

BY

J. G. MILLAIS

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
NEW YORK, BOMBAY, AND MADRAS
1919

# WANDERINGS AND MEMORIES

BY

J. G. MILLAIS

AUTHOR OF

"A BREATH FROM THE VELDT," "BRITISH DIVING DUCKS," "THE MAMMALS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND," "NEWFOUNDLAND AND ITS UNTRODDEN WAYS," "THE LIFE OF F. C. SELOUS, D.S.O.," ETC.

*WITH 4 COLLOTYPE PLATES AND 11 OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS FROM AUTHOR'S DRAWINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHS*

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# INTRODUCTION

THIS book describes incidents of my own life and in the lives of others I have known; travels in search of big game and Natural History; letters of strange interest by all kinds of men living in many lands; sidelights on the Great War, in fact a conglomeration of anything in life that might prove of interest to men and women who move about and do things a little out of the ordinary ruck. They have been set down rather as the spirit moved me to write, and if somewhat disjointed, I trust they will appeal to other rovers like myself. If variety is the spice of life, perhaps even such tales as these may find their readers amongst those who have followed the open road.

J. G. MILLAIS.

*Compton's Brow, Horsham.*
*July* 1919.

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# WANDERINGS AND MEMORIES

## CHAPTER I

### WHEN I WAS YOUNG

ONE autumn day in 1871 a little boy of six stood in a garden in Scotland, lost in contemplation of an old muzzle-loading gun leaning against a hedge. Duncan the gardener had left it there—loaded, of course, and at full cock—and gone to his dinner. The small man was torn with doubts and fears. Being convinced of the inefficiency of a crude catapult he had purchased at old Thomas Lee's shop in George Street, Perth; now he saw before him visions of real slaughter amongst the sparrows sitting amongst the pea-sticks, for he was a hunter by instinct. Had he not seen Duncan fire off that terrible weapon without suffering personal damage? He wanted to handle real dead game shot by himself, and the temptation proved irresistible, although he knew sore limbs and a possible thrashing for touching loaded firearms might ensue.

After balancing the gun on a spade-handle and pulling both triggers at once, he knew of nothing but stars for a moment, and then found himself lying on his back with a damaged arm and singing head. He made certain, too, his jaw was broken. Worst of all, there was no game to retrieve. Where-

fore then and there he made a vow that all the blandishments and temptations in the world could not induce him to fire a gun again in his lifetime. The consequences were too fearful, and how Duncan had the strength and courage to do it he could not understand. Duncan, indeed, must be a Hercules at least, and therefore entitled to intense respect.

After this unfortunate episode, the desire to possess specimens of birds being undiminished, I resolved to study and achieve some skill with that much misunderstood little weapon, the catapult, as it seemed to offer certain possibilities of being made fairly accurate, and could not, at any rate, mangle its user in the same way as firearms. I practised assiduously, but it was not until I went to Marlborough, at the age of eleven, that another boy, named "Viper" Clark, who was a splendid shot, initiated me into the mysteries of the small, square "tweaker" elastic—how to put on the bag and make a hard fork from privet, properly burnt in the flame of a candle. He also instructed me in several important items, such as weight of shot according to size of elastic, shape and use of chamois-leather bag, how to adjust rubber to fork and bag to avoid fraying in use, and, most important of all, how to keep elastic at the right temperature. All these and other details are essential to the boy who would achieve success with the insignificant little "tweaker," and I worked so hard to improve my shooting—being then perfectly absorbed both in the hunting and preservation of my specimens—that I soon surpassed my master, and became the leader of a gang of what my tutors described as "undisciplined young reprobates, who spent their

time fighting with town boys or wandering aimlessly in the forest."

In consequence, although my ornithological collection benefited by over two hundred species of British birds, the four years spent at Marlborough were marked by constant trouble and disgrace, although personally I never felt I was doing anything to be ashamed of. I was the only boy who ever went through Marlborough and was birched by the Head Master four times (all for catapulting) without being expelled. Boys were warned by their parents against me as being a bad character, and at that time my very harmless offence was bracketed in the category of the worst crimes. At Eton and other schools no one thinks much of a "swishing," but at Marlborough, between the years 1878–1881, a boy swished by the Head Master was considered to be quite beyond the pale, and if the punishment was repeated he was usually expelled with ignominy. No master at that time seemed to have the faintest notion that a boy could be so absorbed in the collection of specimens of natural history that he would take all risks, both of corporal punishment and lines (which were worse), as well as being held up to disgrace, for the sake of his hobby. With me the obsession was like that of a dog who has killed a sheep, there was no cure, so I went through some of the happiest as well as the bitterest times of my life under a cloud of universal reprobation.

Only "Dicky" Richardson, the master of the lower school, used to be interested in the sketches I did in the forest. When he left Marlborough as an old man a few years ago, his pupils subscribed

a gift of £100 so that he might buy any present he fancied, and thus he wrote to me: "The boys have given me £100 to do with as I like, and the first thing I shall do with it is to buy all your books and present them to the school library. I always believed in you, and knew you would make good." That was very nice of him, but somehow I wish he had said that to me when I was young and wanted some encouragement and help. It would have meant so much.

Though it is probable that some of the punishments were well deserved, it was not always the case. The severest imposition I received was for an act committed by another boy. One day, coming off the playing-fields, I met my friend "Viper," and he showed me a long-range catapult he had just made, and to exhibit its accuracy he fired three shots at a hen walking in Lynes' farmyard, about eighty yards away. The aim of the third was so good that it took the unfortunate bird in the head and rolled it over in the throes of death. At this moment one of Lynes' men appeared on the scene, and grasping the situation, at once ran up the hill towards us. The correct policy would have been to have stood our ground, but "Viper," being seized with panic, ran for the Porter's Lodge. I accompanied him. At the very moment that my friend placed his catapult and shot under some cushions, the Porter came out, and Lynes' man arriving in hot haste on the scene, we were fairly caught.

Next day, much to the disgust of my House Master, F. E. Thompson, we were hailed before the Head Master, the Rev. G. C. Bell, to whom "Viper" honourably admitted the offence, and explained

that I had been merely a spectator, and in no way connected with the death of the hen. After giving me a lecture, the "Head" "swished" Viper and acquitted me. Not so my House Master, who made me come in every afternoon of the half-holidays during the whole of the summer term and write out Milton's "Paradise Lost" twice over. Seeing that the Head Master had absolved me from blame, I thought it was a most unfair and even inhuman punishment, and ever afterwards I bore a grudge against "Jick" and loathed Milton and all his works.

I had many adventures in the course of my wanderings in the forest of Savernake and "out of bounds" up and down the River Kennet. The following incident is one that always remains in my mind, as it afforded myself and many other boys much amusement.

At all public schools there is always a master who does not play games, and is chiefly concerned in doing police work in the neighbouring country, accompanied by boys who act as his toadies and spies. His object is to arrest marauders like myself, who are ever breaking out of bounds and performing illegal acts contrary to school discipline. Though all my time was spent within his sphere of influence, I had always managed to outwit "Pat" Drury and his satellites, and, though arrested by others, he had so far failed to catch me *flagrante delicto*.

One summer afternoon I was busily pursuing a flock of Longtailed Tits in the forest of Savernake, being then about two hundred yards from the edge of the forest, and was in the act of shooting, when, happening to glance around, I saw "Pat" advanc-

ing towards me with rapid strides. It was the work of a moment to put my cap over my face and run for the forest edge, where there was a high beech-tree, which I had once been up for a Stock Dove's nest. I had a good start, and reached this tree some two hundred yards ahead of my pursuer. Being then a good climber, and guessing that Pat was a poor one, it was not long before I was sixty feet up, and well concealed amidst the leafy branches. "Pat" paused at the foot of the tree and called out—

"Come down at once, boy, I know who you are."

For a moment I hesitated, and then, as he had not mentioned my name, I remained *perdu*.

After a time he tried blandishments and then threats, even giving my name, but in such a doubtful manner that I knew he was not certain. Accordingly I remained perfectly quiet. Pat sat at the foot of the tree for an hour, and then got up and marched off down the hill to where a stile intercepted some fields leading to the railway line, which he would have to cross in going to the school.

Now from my elevated perch I had a very clear view of the line, and as I did not see him cross it, I concluded he had hidden himself somewhere near the stile and was waiting for me to fall into his clutches. Another half an hour went by, when suddenly I saw his figure outlined against the sky crossing the railway between two trucks.

A brilliant idea then seized me. Supposing I could reach the school ahead of "Pat," I could prove an *alibi*. It was possible but not probable, but I resolved to try it by a way I knew.

About a quarter of a mile above the Kennet Bridge, the main road to the school, and above "Treacle Bolly" (a long line of trees), was a narrow part of the river which it was possible to ford in summer. This point lay amidst water meadows almost opposite the school chapel, whose gates were kept locked. The great obstacle to entering the school by this route was the high and spiked palings, about eleven feet high, round the school quadrangle. I had never been over them, and doubted my ability to climb them, but resolved to try as my only chance.

Rapidly descending the beech, I ran all the way down the chalk hills, avoided the Kennet Bridge, where Pat might still be waiting, raced through "Treacle Bolly," and pulling off my trousers, socks and boots, waded the river, which took me to the armpits. Once on the other side, I redressed and stuffed my shirt, which had, of course, become soaked, into my trousers, and then ran across the meadows till I reached the high palings of the school quadrangle. Their height and formidable appearance at first appalled me, but it had to be done.

These iron palings, with long spikes on the top, were more or less hidden from view from the school side by a row of lime-trees, so, although the courtyard was crowded—it was "call" time—only a few boys saw my ineffectual efforts to climb the railings. I got to the top, and managed to get one leg over, when, slipping on the spikes, one of them went clean through my coat and held me fast. Had it not been for the help of two good Samaritans, who came to the rescue and released first the coat and then myself, I should have been forced to call for

help, and that would have made a scene, and possibly called the attention of some meddlesome Sixth Form boy or a master.

Once in safety I found one of my friends, and instructed him to watch the main road approach to the Porter's Lodge and to tell of the advent of "Pat" Drury. Scarce a minute elapsed when he announced the coming of the master, so, taking my friend's arm, we strolled out, and as we passed him took off our caps in the approved fashion.

"Pat" stood perfectly still in the middle of the road staring at me. He was too much astonished even to say a word. I had proved an *alibi*.

The result of this little adventure, of course, became school gossip, and it was not long before "Pat" heard how he had been outwitted. No master likes being made fun of, and, though the boys enjoyed the joke, the subject thereof swore he would lay himself out to catch me, and how he eventually succeeded is another story.

As all who have been at public schools know, there is always a certain rivalry and even enmity between the boys of the school and those of the town. Marlborough was not different from other places. There were groups of rough boys who liked to get up a fight on some pretext, and take what they considered some of the conceit out of the boys of the college. Fights of any magnitude were rare, but there was one small gang, led by a big red-haired boy named Dixon, who used stones and catapults, and who never failed to attack my little band whenever opportunity offered.

Dixon was my arch-enemy, and was a good shot. I had had two single-handed duels with him. In

the first I got the worst of it, having run out of ammunition. He then caught me, and being a much bigger and stronger boy, gave me a good thrashing. Some months afterwards we met again one day in "Treacle Bolly" and had a battle royal, each from behind a tree at a distance of about twenty-five yards. He hit me twice, and then, as he raised his right hand to shoot, I got him exactly right on the knuckles, when he dropped his catapult and fairly howled. Then he ran, and I got him twice more before he was out of shot. His catapult I still have as a trophy of the chase.

The end of my days at Marlborough had arrived, and I was to leave the school, and was not sorry. Having escaped detection for a whole year, my supposititious virtue resulted in an invitation to breakfast with the Head Master, "Ullage,"[1] a great honour. He was very kind, and hoped I would now lead a "new" life, and had given up catapulting; and I remember his Wiltshire sausages were of the best. That afternoon my chosen band, Miller,[2] Mangles, Cayley,[3] and two others, whose names I forget, went for a grand final foray in the forest. We were all well armed and had plenty of shot. It had been a great day, and we had each killed several birds and were in high spirits as we descended the last hill of the downs near Kennet Bridge. At this

[1] "Ullage" was the school nickname for the Very Reverend Canon Bell. One day he asked the Sixth Form the meaning of the word "ullage," and no one could answer him. So he took down a dictionary and read out with solemnity, "Ullage —all filth." That name stuck to him all his years at Marlborough. He was a good, kind man, and we all respected him.

[2] Captain Miller, the famous polo player.

[3] Arthur Cayley, a well-known angler and sportsman.

moment a band of town boys emerged from the foot of the hill and advanced towards us. We were in no mood for fighting. Each group passed the other eyeing one another like two dogs that remember former battles.

Dixon made some sneering remark, but, as all our weapons were ready and loaded, he passed on. It was, however, only the lull before the storm.

The critical moment seemed to have passed, when a severe blow and a stinging sensation on the inside of my right leg made me almost drop to the ground. One of the town boys had hit me with a small stone, and I still carry the mark of the cut. Arthur Cayley whipped round and got to work at once, and in less than a minute we were all in the thick of as fierce a fight with shot and stones as I ever remember. Our opponents mustered about twenty. They had Dixon, who was a good shot, and about seven others with large catapults, the rest using stones, whilst our five were all picked shots using small "tweakers," which up to thirty yards have a considerable accuracy. Singling out Dixon, whom I knew was the leader and the most dangerous man, in the first minute I hit him in the face. Owing to this success we advanced, and the faint-hearted ones soon broke and ran, shortly afterwards followed by the rest.

Perhaps we ought to have been satisfied at this success, but our blood was up, and we chased the enemy right up over the hill and across the line, where they took up a formidable position on a long stone-heap lying parallel with the railway, whilst we in turn got cover from some trucks. An indecisive engagement then ensued for some ten

minutes, when, on the advent of a small urchin from the town, we retired into a "loose box," and gave the boy sixpence to go across the no man's land and say we had retired.

A great surprise attack must be the *coup de grâce*, and how eagerly we watched the "Townees" leave their fortifications and come across to our lately occupied trenches! As they stooped to pass through the trucks we leaped out upon them, and then the squeals of pain, the result of shots at close range, were only broken by a rush of newcomers in the shape of "Pat" Drury and his satellites. We were fairly caught. A sad ending indeed to a great day.

Next morning we stood in a line before the "Head," and I could not help thinking how different were the circumstances of the moment to those of the previous day.

The Rev. G. C. Bell gave us the usual homily on the dastardly nature of our offence, adding—

"As for you, Millais, I fear you are quite incorrigible and will come to a bad end. What on earth do you do it for?"

I could only hang my head, but blurted out—

"For scientific purposes, sir."

"Good Heavens, boy!" he gasped; "do you mean to say that catapulting small (*sic*) boys in the region of the—er—er—posterior can be done for the sake of science?"

Then followed the usual harrowing scene, in which the Head Master, two strong Sixth Form boys, a birch and a struggling victim played their parts. "Ullage" was always supposed to be very "slack" and half asleep, but I know, having tested

them four times, that there was nothing the matter with his muscles.

A few minutes later Arthur Cayley and I strolled slowly through the peaceful grounds that surround the semi-sacred precincts of the Head Master's house at the back of the college. Although sore we were young and cheerful, and the prospect of leaving the birch at a remote distance in the future was very pleasant. By this time I knew the call of nearly every small British land bird, and could stand in a wood or marsh and recognise all the different species. It was not surprising, therefore, that as we walked slowly along I was suddenly brought to a standstill by the cry of a bird I had never heard before. What was it? That I must discover at once. The cry was frequently repeated, and passing through the shrubbery, there was the bird sitting on a willow-tree.

I had a "secret" pocket on the inside of my waistcoat in which reposed my favourite "catty" and a few shot. It was soon out, and at the first shot there was a welcome "plunk," and the rarity —a female Cirl Bunting—fell dead. With my treasure in my pocket I made my way back to Arthur Cayley, who had kept watch, and met the other delinquents fresh from their chastisement. They were all much interested in the "new" bird, which I still treasure owing to the curious circumstances under which it was obtained.

During one of my holidays I went with my parents to stay at Condover Hall in Shropshire. The owner of this superb Elizabethan mansion, crowded with ancient treasures, was Mr. Reginald Cholmondely. He was a very brilliant and handsome man, a good

artist and sculptor and a fine shot and billiard player. After the death of his wife, to whom he was greatly attached, he travelled much in various parts of the world, and devoted himself entirely to Natural History. Condover was turned into a private Zoo, and when in England all his time was occupied in making collections of birds and insects. His collection of exotic Lepidoptera was one of the best in Europe, whilst at the time his Birds of Paradise (afterwards purchased by the Duke of Westminster) were unique. Owing to my interest in birds he took a fancy to me, and asked my parents to allow me to spend all my holidays at Condover, and so, except in the autumn, when we always went to Scotland, my vacations were for several years passed in Shropshire. He gave me a pony to ride, and allowed me to shoot whenever I liked on the great estate and fish in the beautiful lake of Beaumer, where the Great Crested Grebes used to breed. It was a very happy time for me, and Mr. Cholmondely taught me many things, always treating me as if I were a man as old as himself. Daily I attended to the aviary of Eastern Pheasants, where there was a so-called "tame" roebuck, of which I was terribly afraid, as he always charged if you turned your back on him. One day this vicious little animal sent me flying against the fence of the enclosure, and attacked so vigorously, although his horns were absent, that I had to call for help. The strength of even so small an animal as the roebuck is very great.[1]

[1] Lady MacPherson Grant of Ballindalloch was attacked one day, some years ago, by a tame roebuck and very seriously injured.

There were Skuas, Eagle Owls, various raptorials, and other creatures to feed, as well as putting fresh labels with correct Latin names on all the collections of Humming-Birds, Birds of Paradise and American species. All this was excellent training for a young naturalist. Moreover, when in London I always accompanied Mr. Cholmondely when he went to purchase specimens of shells, birds and insects of the principal naturalists of the day, and this gave me a considerable insight into the values and proper methods of housing collections.

One day we went to see John Gould, the famous naturalist, from whom Mr. Cholmondely had bought many Humming-Birds and Birds of Paradise. He had just received two specimens of the then new *Parrotia sexpennis*, the six-wired Bird of Paradise. It was a gorgeous creature, and my friend at once fell in love with the specimen offered to him at the stiff price of £40. I was examining the bird, and the bargain was practically concluded, when I innocently remarked—

"Why, then, Mr. Gould, is this bird called *Parrotia sexpennis?* I see it has only four wires."

If a bomb had burst in the room it would scarcely have created a greater sensation. Gould was lying on a sofa, being a martyr to gout, but he rolled off the couch and pulled the bird out of my hands and threw it into the box, at the same time using terrible language to his daughter to take all the specimens away. The old naturalist was a man of violent temper, and I had spoilt his little game, so when Mr. Cholmondely told me to come away, being himself convulsed with laughter, I thought I had made an enemy for life. But I was quite wrong.

Next day I had a most charming letter from Gould, saying that he had been much struck by my powers of observation—rare in one so young—and hoped I would call and discuss Natural History with him whenever I liked. After this I went many times to see him, and he always treated me as if I were an equal in knowledge.

Reginald Cholmondely was a peculiar man. He used to have his fits of depression, and would not speak a word for days, but I was so happy hunting for birds and attending to the menagerie that it did not affect me. At other times he would cram his house with visitors, and had a taste for brilliant and interesting people. On one occasion Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) and his family came and stayed for a month, and we had great times.

Mark Twain was one of the most charming men who ever lived, and had a fascination for young as well as older people. My sister Carrie (Lady Stuart of Wortley) and I used to hang on to his arm, and he would tell us funny stories about Western days, as we strolled about the gardens, till we felt we could never let him go. He was a brilliant conversationalist, and knew how to interest an audience as few other men. With no hat on his shock head, and a corn-cob pipe in his mouth, he would discourse for hours on any subject, bringing into his narratives that essence of kindly feeling and abundant humour which characterised all his thoughts. In the evening he would read to us chapters of *The Tramp Abroad*, which he had just completed, and a happier party than that at Condover in the autumn of 1879 was not to be found in England.

My principal ally at Condover was the head

keeper, one Sharp, who was a good observer and a most determined man. At that time poaching was more in vogue than it is to-day in Shropshire, Cheshire, Lancashire and Derbyshire, where huge stocks of game were raised. Gangs of rough fellows used to come and raid the fields and woods, and fierce affrays between the keepers and law-breakers were not uncommon. Sharp himself was permanently lame as the result of one of these battles, when a poacher had fired at him from close range.

As an instance of Sharp's quick practice with these gentry, I may give the following example, of which I was an eye-witness. One day Sharp and I with another under-keeper were ferreting and shooting rabbits on the side of a sandy bank close to the lake of Beaumer. A big excavation had been made in the sand to recover a sulky ferret that had "laid up," when Sharp suddenly raised his head and uttered a quick exclamation. We looked over the hedge, and there was to be seen a couple of greyhounds closely pursuing a hare in the direction of our present position. Sharp in a low voice enjoined us to keep still, and in another moment the hare passed through a gap—about ten yards away—closely followed by the two dogs. The keeper raised his gun and killed both dogs dead on the spot with a clean right and left. He then dropped his gun, and seizing both the bodies, threw them into the hole we had dug, and in a moment they were covered.

I confess I was a bit horrified at the suddenness of it all, but when the two owners of the dogs came strolling up and asked if we had seen two grey-

**STUDY OF A WAPITI**
*From a Drawing by the Author*

hounds, "which had got away from them" in pursuit of a hare, Sharp, with an innocent smile, at once denied any knowledge of the missing animals, and even rated the men, whom he knew to be well-known poachers, for allowing their dogs to stray on to the squire's land.

Speaking of hare poaching, the neatest trick I ever saw was the method employed by men accompanied by trained lurchers in the Eastern counties. One day, cycling near Wangford, in Suffolk, I passed two men on an ordinary butcher's cart. There was nothing externally to show that they were not butchers going their round with the usual well-cart and advertising signs. We passed one another at cross roads at the corner of a stubble field, when something went wrong with my machine, and I dismounted to adjust it. Through the quickset hedge I noticed that the butchers had also halted, and their movements being suspicious, I crawled into the ditch and watched them unobserved.

The cart was stopped within twenty yards of a large field gate, and one of the men was standing up in the cart carefully surveying the landscape with a pair of field-glasses. Being satisfied with the outlook, he then descended to the road, and with a key opened the well of the cart, from which two clean-looking lurchers at once leapt to the ground. The poacher, for such he was, then advanced to the gate with the two dogs, leaving the second man standing in the cart surveying the field, where he had doubtless observed a hare in its "form."

Number one then placed one dog close to the gate, which was slightly opened to give easy egress on the

part of the hare when it sought to escape. The second dog was given an order, and galloped off along the hedgerow to the far end of the field, which it proceeded to quarter, until a hare was started. This dog chased its quarry until it was within thirty yards of the gate, and as the latter "jinked" through the opening, the second dog sprang out and killed it instantly. The first dog then again ranged the field and moved another hare to the gate. This victim was also killed in the same manner.

Immediately on the death of the second hare the poacher who had first released the dogs called them, and they at once jumped up into the well, whilst the dead hares were locked in another small box fitted under the cart.

The whole operation took less than five minutes, and was so cleanly and skilfully done that detection was scarcely possible. Even if a keeper had appeared on the scene the men would doubtless have whistled to the dogs and driven off at full speed.

One day in 1878, when walking along the Brompton Road, I noticed a sign "Bicycling taught here." The prospect was alluring, so I went in, and found myself in a large enclosure where aspirants were pursuing their wobbly way on the old wooden bone-shakers. I took four lessons, and used to ride round the squares on one of these hireling's monstrosities. Soon after I had learned to ride two boys bet me a sovereign I could not ride from Cromwell Place to Piccadilly Circus and back, and of course I took the wager. One boy went to the Circus to see that I got there. Bicycling on a

bone-shaker in Piccadilly in 1878 was not quite so simple a matter as on an ordinary safety of to-day, and I know that when I reached the massed traffic opposite Bond Street I would gladly have given a sovereign to have been safely home again. In those days bicyclists were called "Cads on Castors," and other opprobrious terms, and small boys, pedestrians and cab-drivers jeered at one and made rude remarks. However, everything comes to an end, and not without several falls and much getting off and on in the midst of traffic, I did the round and got my sovereign. I soon had a good high steel bicycle, and was the first boy allowed to possess one at Marlborough, and so started the fashion, even teaching the masters, who used to let me off extra lessons in consequence.

Though never a good bicyclist, I once did the Perth to Inverness ride in two days, somewhat of a feat at that time, but my brother Geoff was an expert, and was one of the first to undertake long continental tours. He was, I believe, the first man to enter Italy from France, walking his machine up the St. Gothard Pass until the road ended, and then with the help of a shepherd he carried it fifteen miles over the snow. On reaching the first village in Italy he was arrested "for disturbing the public peace, and bringing into the country a vehicle calculated to be a danger to pedestrians and a danger to horses." After paying a fine he was released.

In spite of the sad experience with Duncan's gun, before mentioned, I began shooting seriously in 1875, and until 1879 had to rely on any old weapon I could borrow or hire, until one day, firing at an

Oyster-Catcher on the River Tay at Dalguise, the nipple of the old muzzle-loading 12-bore I had hired blew out and cut my cheek rather badly. My father, being a man of common sense, knew well I would get a gun somehow or other, and so gave me a beautiful little 20-bore, which, being a full choke, was a fine killing weapon, and with it I shot the greater part of my collection. By the time I was thirteen I was a fairly experienced shot, and commenced my long wanderings on the sea-coasts of Scotland, roaming from Dunbar in the south to Loch Erreboll in Sutherland. Three times I walked the whole length of the east and north-east coasts, often being forced, in getting from high-water mark to the next public ground, to cross moorlands where grouse and rabbits were abundant. Often was I stopped by infuriated game-keepers, but on learning my errand, that of the pursuit of wild birds, and finding no game in my bag, they were convinced of my innocence. They were nearly always kind, and often walked for miles to show me the nearest route to the next area of sands. Scottish gamekeepers, as a rule, have some love for Nature, and being interested in such a little chap on his travels, took me to their houses and gave me tea. Sometimes I slept on the floor or sofa, and they never refused hospitality at night. I knew in time every fisherman and longshoreman between St. Andrews and Arbroath, which was my favourite beat in autumn and winter, and was known to them as "Johnny with the long gun." In 1880 I purchased from an innkeeper in Perth a pup collie-and-smooth-coated retriever mongrel, which was the best and most courageous dog I have ever seen.

She accompanied me wherever I went for fifteen years, and many a time in autumn we spent the night together lying in sandhills, sleeping where we could find a sheltered bank, or wakeful and watching for the dawn when it was too cold to sleep. There was never a sea too thunderous to enter or a bird fallen at a distance that was beyond Jet's powers, and being always with me, I brought her education to a pitch of intelligence I do not see exhibited in Field trial dogs of to-day, whose training is often calculated to destroy initiative and turn them into machines.[1]

My father and mother were always opposed to these constant absences on my part, but being good-natured and broad-minded people, and having regard to the fact that I always returned at some time or another, they had got accustomed to my perpetual wanderings, and ceased to wonder.

My usual plan was to go by train to some point on the coast and send my bag forward some thirty miles (since the line travels along nearly the whole coast-line from Berwick to Helmsdale), and then work towards it. Many a day I never reached my dry clothes and extra cartridges, because I had seen some rare visitor at which a shot could not be obtained. Then it meant a night, and sometimes two, out in the open, until the specimen was bagged or lost. It was rough work for one so young, but I loved the life as only a young naturalist can do, and when I shot a Knot or a Turnstone in summer plumage I did not envy any man in the world. Another good hunting- and fishing-ground was Loch

[1] I can speak from experience, as I have judged at many "Field" trials.

Leven, where Sir Graham Montgomery used to let me have his private boat once or twice in the season every year, and here I got a fine series of ducks and other birds. P. D. Malloch of Perth generally used to go with me, and we had great times on this famous loch for many years. Once during a storm I shot 107 mallard and teal in one day, and one August day killed over fifty duck and snipe walking round the lake, when, on arriving at Duncan's Corner, a breeze from the east sprang up, and we took to the boat and fished. Never before or since had I seen trout rise on Loch Leven as they did that day. We killed forty, with four over 3 lbs., in two drifts.

In 1880 my brother Geoff and I made our first journey to the Orkneys, and this was the commencement of some twenty-two visits in summer, winter or spring which I spent there wild-fowling and collecting birds between the years 1880–1892. With my regular boatmen, James Sutherland and John Sinclair on the sea, and John Omand on the Lakes of Stenness and Harray, I had grand sport for many years, as at that time few visitors ever came to the islands or understood their facilities for wild sport.

Good or evil fortune often turns on trifles, and how England won the great Rugby match at Edinburgh in January 1886 by the veriest fluke in the world I can relate.

My two greatest friends at Cambridge were the brothers Jeffery. The elder brother, W. L., commonly known as "Long 'Un" (he was six feet five inches), was a man of extremely amiable temperament, and being fond of music and sport of all kinds, was a general favourite. He has long

since passed into the shades, to the regret of all who knew him. His brother, G. L., was certainly one of the finest athletes of his day, and as a forward at Rugby unequalled in quickness on the ball and tackling. He also excelled in all other games, besides being the most good-natured person in the world.

George (who was in the Cambridge fifteen), Willie and I went to Stromness in December 1886 for the usual month's "flighting" and tramping the moors or hunting in the seas. The day we left Stromness George received a telegram asking him to play for England at Edinburgh on January 8, 1886. As we crossed the Pentland Firth a fearful snowstorm and gale, the worst I have ever seen in Scotland, fell upon us from the north, and we had much difficulty in making the Scrabster harbour at Thurso, where, on the morning of January 4th, we found eight feet of snow. After struggling through the drifts, we at last reached Henderson's Hotel, where we received the unwelcome news that the line was blocked for many miles to the south. Now at any other time young fellows like ourselves would have cared nothing for an enforced visit of a few days, but for George to be debarred from playing in the great game was more than a joke.

I went to the rocks, where I killed my first Glaucous and Iceland Gulls, and a great rarity in the shape of an adult Ivory Gull, the sixth British example. George and Willie discussed with fishermen the possibility of getting a sailing-boat round the coast to Aberdeen, an altogether hopeless proposition in the gale then still raging.

To make a long story short, a train from the south

charged through the snow to Georgemas Junction, and we got away with two days to spare. The discomforts of that journey, which occupied forty-eight hours, till we reached Edinburgh, one and a half hours before the match, need not be described. George had had no sleep or breakfast, but he ran to the Inverleith Ground, and, much to the disgust of the substitute waiting to play in his stead, donned his togs and took the field with the English team.

The great match of 1886 was perhaps the most closely contested fight between England and Scotland ever witnessed at Edinburgh. Both sides strove hard to score, but without success, till the last five minutes, when an Englishman by a great effort got over the line and scored a try for England. It was George who had won the match.

Between the years 1880 and 1890 I used to visit my favourite hunting-grounds in the Orkneys, and during this time enjoyed magnificent sport in out-of-the-way places, which at that time others had not discovered. Until I threw a fly on Loch Stenness I believe no one had fished this excellent loch except poachers with the "otter." One morning I saw good trout rising to the natural fly at the east end of the lake, and calling Johnny Lyon, my regular gillie, I took ten fish of 10 lbs. weight in an hour. Then the rise ceased. I found that this occurred every day in early August, and that the rise only lasted for one hour. Then we would put on a No. 5 Brown's Phantom Minnow and troll to the north end of the lake, a distance of about three miles, and sometimes kill a big trout or two on the way. In the course of these years I captured yellow trout of 5, 6, 9 and 10 lbs. weight,

and one day hooked a monster which, despite Johnny's efforts to overtake him, ran me right out, jumped and broke. He leaped three times altogether, so we had a very clear view of his proportions, which I placed at about 15 lbs.

"Did you ever see a bigger trout in the lake than that?" I remarked regretfully to Johnny.

"Yes," he replied, "I set night-lines with worms in March, and have caught two fish of twenty pounds."

Johnny was a reliable boy and not given to exaggeration, so I said to him that if he ever caught another twenty-pounder in March he must send it addressed to me at Malloch's in Perth. Several years went by, and then one day a box arrived at Malloch's consigned to me. On being opened it contained a monster yellow trout, the largest ever captured in the British Islands. It weighed on receipt 29½ lbs., and had been caught by Johnny Lyon on a night-line.

The stuffed fish I presented to a hotel-keeper in Stromness, who wished to have it as a lure for possible anglers.

Another great sport at Stenness was stalking Grey Mullet with a long trammel net. Some people might think this a mere poaching dodge, but as a matter of fact it was high-class sport. At a distance of two hundred yards—it was not safe to get nearer, as these shy fish both see and hear wonderfully—John Oman and I would spot a shoal of big Grey Mullet feeding in the shallows. We then anchored the boat and slipped overboard up to our armpits. John took one end of the net and I the other, and we proceeded to get outside the fish and intercept

them when in alarm they rushed for the deeper water. It was very exciting, as one had to creep at a snail's pace until the net completely encircled the shoal of fish, which must not on any account be alarmed until the net was close to them. We could seldom approach nearer than twenty yards without being detected, and then came the rush, we running for the shore, the fish dashing at the net, from which they immediately recoiled. Even within the few moments occupied by our advance the Grey Mullet often succeeded in beating us, either by darting to the ends and then escaping between our legs or by recoiling and leaping clean over the net.

Nevertheless we had some good takes, once netting twelve ranging from 4 to 12 lbs. The stalking advance was grand, and I often wonder if any other sportsmen have tried it since. John Oman still lives at Stenness, but tells me he is now too old "for the watter."

Writing in 1907, when I had sent him a copy of my *Wildfowler in Scotland*, John Oman says, "There are some nice pictures in the book of our old days together, but what I should like to have seen was the picture of when you jumped overboard in Voy Bay when the net was carried away by Grey Mullet." On this occasion John was at one end of the net in the shallows and working round the shoal of fish, which was a much larger one than we had expected. I was still in the boat, rowing gently to encircle them, when the whole school became alarmed and made a dash for the centre of the net, tearing the cord out of my hand. Not a moment was to be lost to prevent the escape of the

fish, so I simply tumbled overboard and swam about till I recovered the rope, and made for the shore, after many struggles. About half of the fish did escape, but we had a good haul nevertheless, containing one monster fish of over 13 lbs. These Grey Mullet have a greater strength and activity than any other fish with which I am acquainted, often throwing themselves right out of the boat from the bottom. Moreover, they possess a back fin armed with formidable spikes, similar to a perch, so they are by no means easy to handle. Our usual method for killing was to strike them as quickly as possible with a wooden mallet.

I think it was in 1887, the first year of the Wild Birds' Protection Act, that, on returning one summer's day from Orkney to Murthly, I found our old friend Sir William Harcourt, the sponsor of the Bill, a guest in the house.

"Where have you come from, Johnny?" he remarked.

"From Orkney," I answered, "where I have been contravening the Wild Birds' Protection Act."

"You young scoundrel," he said with indignation, "you ought to be prosecuted."

Now, as a matter of fact, I do not think I had shot a single bird on the prohibited schedule, but had been engaged in filling up the long series of immature gulls which it is necessary to have to make a complete collection of British birds in all stages of life. I explained all this to Sir William, and showed him that to a professional naturalist these birds were absolutely necessary for future scientific explanation, and that up to date there was no work in existence dealing with their life histories, and that

in time I hoped to write one. I saw his face relaxing at this, and when I had completed my argument, he said—

"Well, I must say you have made out a good case for the professional naturalist, who, if he can show that he is genuinely devoting his specimens to science, should have a Government pass permitting him to collect such birds as are absolutely necessary."

This was great news, and it made me think; so, going to my room, I drew up a document embodying all we had discussed, and presented it to Sir William, requesting his signature. But Sir William was much too clever to be caught.

"Not on any account," he said, "will I sign that paper. I don't know what kind of a naturalist you are, Johnny, but I think you would make a pretty good lawyer."

As I had already killed a pair or two of all the birds that are resident in summer in the British Islands, it was only on rare occasions that I found it necessary to shoot a bird "out of season." At any rate, I was never apprehended, although on more than one occasion the minions of the law both suspected and chased me.

One lovely still evening in the spring of 1889 I came into the little bay where the picturesque town of Stromness stands. Jimmy Sutherland, Tom Sinclair and I had been away amongst the islands hunting seals and looking for Slavonian Grebes, which sometimes passed on their migration to Iceland. Right in the harbour itself I saw a bird that I have never seen before in Orkney, a Black-throated Diver. I at once got my gun out from the box where I kept it in concealment, and as the

bird rose and flew right overhead I killed it dead. Now on a windy day, and it is usually a windy day in Orkney, the report might have passed unnoticed, but on this occasion the noise echoed far and wide throughout the town, and many people standing on the quays witnessed the illegal act, and I feared that some meddlesome body might make trouble. Not that I expected any of the fishermen or people of the town, who all knew me well, would say anything, but a local policeman or magistrate would be forced to take notice.

That night my old friend Sheriff Miller, who was in Stromness for the day to try local cases, came to dinner, and we had a pleasant meal. He was a genial soul, and had even forgiven me on one occasion when I had dropped a right and left at Red-breasted Mergansers (at the Bridge of Waithe) on to his head as he drove along the Kirkwall Road. This had caused his horse to take fright and spill him and his friends into a ditch. After a bottle of port he became communicative, and looking at me slyly he remarked—

"A ken fine what ye're here for, Muster Mullais, but ye munna shoot in the harbour or I'll hae to tak ye up."

It was nicely put, and I took the hint in future.

When I was quartered in Glasgow in 1888 I heard that there were some flocks of Knots and Bar-tailed Godwits on the Tay Estuary in June, and as I had not specimens of my own shooting in summer plumage, I spent a week there in their pursuit. The Tay Estuary on both sides was carefully watched by both coastguards and excisemen, so I had a difficult time, and was chased on more than

one occasion, but it would take too long to narrate the shifts and expedients of concealment I had to resort to to get my specimens. Some of these are now in the Perth Museum, and others in my own collection. In the course of twenty-five years I killed every British bird that it is possible to obtain in our islands, beyond rare visitors, with the exception of the Curlew Sandpiper in full breeding plumage. That is a great rarity, and I only once saw one. He accompanied a flock of Sanderlings on the south side of Tresco, Scilly, in May 1904. By permission of Mr. Dorrien-Smith I was hunting for some new rarities for his collection when I saw the bird in question. He was terribly shy, and after waiting for two days I noted a sandspit where he, with accompanying Sanderlings, rested at high water. The place was just within a long shot of some sand dunes, where I lay concealed for two hours. At last the tide drove the birds towards me, and I was just preparing to take my shot when an abominable naval gun, recently mounted at St. Mary's, went off, and put every bird to wing in the whole of the islands. The Sanderlings only flew along the coast, but my beautiful Curlew Sandpiper, blood-red in colour, soared straight up into the clouds, and headed for his home in Siberia. I never saw him again.

## CHAPTER II

### SOME EARLY EXPERIENCES IN SHOOTING

ONE day in 1881 my old grandfather, George Gray of Perth, must have had a stroke of luck, for, much to my surprise, he asked me to name a present he wished to give to me. "A first-class pair of ejector guns," was my suggestion. With his permission I consulted Messrs. Reilly, and bought a magnificent pair of hammerless-ejector guns which the firm had recently exhibited at the Paris Exhibition. The subsequent bill rather startled the old man, but he paid it with a good grace.

These were, perhaps, the first pair of good ejector guns ever made, and cost £120—a large price at that time—but they were well worth it, and improved my shooting considerably owing to the quickness of fire. The first day I used them they proved their value. I had been hunting a certain fine roebuck at Murthly, and with the three keepers had beaten all the neighbourhood of the Arch without seeing any roe at all. In the evening I took up a position on a pass leading from a long strip of wood to the moor, and was surprised to see a whole herd of roe, numbering about twenty, coming towards me. As they passed I killed the two leading bucks right and left, and had time to get in another cartridge and fire at the big buck who brought up the rear of the herd. This animal ran some fifty

yards and also fell. Such a gathering of roe I have never seen together before or since in Scotland, and it was great luck to have been able to bag three adult bucks at one stand and at one moment.

These excellent guns I only kept for a short time, owing to an unfortunate accident.

One bitterly cold winter morning in 1887 I went on leave from my regiment, the Seaforth Highlanders, then quartered in Glasgow, and journeyed to Perth, from which I drove in a cab to New Mill, a country estate rented by my father, who had recently given up the Murthly shootings. We were descending the last hill to the house at about seven in the morning, when, on looking from the window of the cab, I saw in the middle of a field a red Irish water spaniel, belonging to one of my brother officers, Malcolm Murray,[1] howling as if his heart would break. At once I got out to ascertain the cause of the trouble, when, looking in the direction of New Mill, I saw the whole place obscured in volumes of smoke. The roof had fallen in and the place was gutted. The sight gave me a shock, as my parents and the servants were living there, and I could only guess what had happened.

Running to the house with the utmost speed, I found no one, only a large upturned grand piano reposed on the lawn in the deep snow, but that plainly showed that the inhabitants had not only saved themselves, but had had time to eject some of the more valuable contents of the house. A gardener then came up and told me that all were

[1] Now Colonel Sir Malcolm Murray, Controller to the Duke of Connaught.

BREAKING IN AND BRANDING A WILD BRONCHO

*From a Drawing by the Author*

safe, and that my father and mother were both at a neighbouring cottage. It appeared that my soldier servant, John Whiteford, had lit a fire in my room the night before to air it and had then gone to bed. About 4 a.m. my mother's maid heard a dog howling, and being nervous about burglars, having formerly been frightened on one occasion, she went to explore, and found the passages full of smoke and the back stairs on fire. She at once raised the alarm, and all the residents got out just as the whole of the lower part of the house burst into flames. John Whiteford, who was a plucky fellow, and knowing that I particularly valued the guns and a certain case containing a series of drawings I had done in Western America, smashed the large window from the outside and entered the blazing room. The smoke was so dense and the heat so great that he was only able to snatch the portfolio of drawings, and being by that time in a fainting condition, was unable to rescue the guns, which lay beneath the bed, so they were irretrievably lost. My father was much pleased at Whiteford's behaviour, and gave him a new outfit and other things, and also presented me with a new pair of guns by Reilly, which I have used ever since.

My father was a man of great common sense, as well as a sportsman of the best kind. He was generous in the extreme towards anything he thought was calculated to foster the true interests of any game or outdoor pastime, but severe in his condemnation of anything unsportsmanlike. I remember once in 1882, when, on my return from my first term at Cambridge, he said one day—

"Hallo, young fellow, you seem unusually flush of money; that is a bit unusual, is it not?"

"Well," I answered with a certain amount of youthful pride, "I won eighty pounds the other day pigeon shooting, and I expect to make some more by and by."[1]

This was true, as I had captured two sweepstakes at Cambridge, killing fifteen birds in succession at the second of these.

"Now look here, Johnny," said my irate parent, "I will give you anything you like in reason for the sake of sport or your Natural History, but I draw the line at pigeon shooting. It is not a clean game, and I won't have you mixed up with that crowd; so give me your promise you will not shoot pigeons again."

I did so, feeling somewhat resentful, but it did not take long for me to find out the wisdom of the old man's advice, and I have never fired at a tame pigeon since.

I used to spend much time shooting and fishing in those days from June till March, and usually began the shooting season on August 1st on the mud-flats and reed-beds of the Tay between Kinfauns, Errol, Inchture and Mugdrum Island. By starting from Perth at midnight one could reach the reed-beds at Errol before other gunners were out, and I have killed as many as forty duck in one day in this public place. The ground is dangerous and requires local knowledge, which I possessed, and a first-class retriever is essential, as the fallen birds usually drop in thick places. On one occasion

[1] Archibald Stuart-Wortley had invited me to come to Hurlingham to compete against some of the great shots.

P. D. Malloch saved my life by pulling me out of a drain into which I had fallen up to my neck. When we had concluded our hunt we repaired to Newburgh, where I borrowed a suit of evening clothes from the landlord of the inn, and in this choice outfit, many sizes too large, and a pair of carpet slippers, I went to the local bootmaker to buy a pair of shoes. In my hands I held my discarded garments, a mass of congealed mud, which provoked the question, "Are you working in the drains about here?" So nowadays, if I should appear in my best clothes before him, Malloch always says, "Are you working in the drains about here?"

Men as a rule, and sportsmen in particular, are apt to gauge respective dangers in sport according to their personal experience, and it is a commonly accepted idea that big-game hunting, especially the chase of the lion, the buffalo and the elephant, is the most dangerous of all forms of the sport. Personally I am inclined to doubt it, and should say that wild-fowling in a punt in the northern firths is almost equally, if not quite, as easy a method of losing one's life.[1] English and Irish waters are comparatively safe, but in the northern firths the wild-fowler will often be caught in sudden squalls when off poling ground, and then nothing but skill and luck can save him. In the course of

[1] In proof of this I may state that out of four professional puntsmen on the Moray between the years 1880–1890, two were drowned and one completely crippled with rheumatism. During the same period on the Forth there were four—possibly more—gunners above Blackness. Two of these also met their death by drowning, one of them being swamped just below the ramparts of Blackness Castle, where I was staying in 1887.

six seasons in which I worked a punt and the big gun on Tay, Eden, Moray, Dornoch, Cromarty and Little Ferry firths I was nearly drowned four times, and once had a very narrow escape from losing my eyesight, if not worse, owing to the bursting of the punt gun.

The worst experience I had—in which, in fact, my life was only saved by a miracle—was on February 10th, 1888, in the Eden Estuary. My puntsman, Jack Pinkney, and I paddled out to a small bunch of Scaup. It was perfectly calm as we lay down to run to the birds, but as we advanced a sudden squall astern ought to have been a warning to us. We approached the birds, which, being few in number here, were not worth a shot with the big gun. Accordingly I took the 8-bore and knocked down three, two dead and one a winger. We should then have picked up the two dead birds and retreated, but, being anxious to secure the cripple, I foolishly went on, though a nasty sea was running astern and increasing every minute. Jack suddenly uttered an exclamation as several waves "pooped" the small punt astern, causing us to bale for our lives. But it was too late, for, after another wash or two, the punt stopped and literally sank beneath us. "We'll have to swim," said Jack, who was a good swimmer, and threw himself into the sea. I struggled a few yards in my heavy clothes and boots, and then caught sight of one of the old posts that used to mark the side of the channel, placed there by musselmen. Almost exhausted, I reached it, and, getting my legs wrapped round its uneven surface, obtained a good grip, with my head above water. Meanwhile Jack had reached the mud and

was running up the banks towards some boats where, by a merciful Providence, two men were engaged in gathering mussels. I clung to the stake in desperation for what seemed ages, but may not have been more than a quarter of an hour, and was on the point of dropping off when I heard voices. A moment later I was dragged into a boat and my life was saved.

Some one had evidently seen us from the shore, because two days later a garbled version of the incident appeared in the Dundee *Evening Telegraph*, and my poor mother, having read it, was nearly demented. It was very rare for men to gather mussels in winter, and the owners of the boat told me they had not been on the river for three weeks, so it was little short of a miracle that they were there that day, so I may say it was a very narrow escape.

Twice Hugh Smith and I were swamped in Campbelltown Bay, Moray Firth. Only good luck too saved us once in Edderton Bay, Dornoch Firth. We were driven to sea, and escaped by coming over a shallow bank about four feet deep, on to which we descended and held the punt by main force until the squall abated and we could again regain the coast. Our clothes were frozen stiff upon us, and we had to walk three miles to find a cottage where we could undress and "thaw" out.

Most of the Scottish firths are dangerous, owing to heavy tides and sudden squalls, and a man who hunts duck there must be careful, but that is the kind of advice no young fellow of spirit will ever take.

One frosty morning in 1892 I saw from the ram-

parts of Fort George a bunch of mallard drifting down with the tide. There were three or four hundred of them, and they were packed close and fast asleep. It was a fine chance, so, calling the puntsman, Hugh Smith, we soon ran out to them. My own big gun being out of repair, I took one belonging to Major Lang, which had, unknown to me, been put aside as out of order. We got well "in," and when I pulled the trigger cord I thought that at least forty mallard would lie dead on the surface. A terrific explosion followed, after which I remembered nothing for a moment or two, and then I heard Hugh swear as only he and a Western cowboy could do. He was completely blinded by the powder and fragments of brass cartridge. When at last I could open one eye, Hugh's face, perfectly black, and running in little streams of blood, was the first thing I saw, and, serious as the occasion was, I could hardly refrain from laughing. After a bit I got a paddle out and managed to get the punt back to the fort, but I did not soon forget that unlucky morning or the wonderful shot that would have been made had all gone well. A fortnight passed before Smith was able to work again.

After hunting the Tay mud-flats in early August I used to go to Loch Leven or the coast-line on the chance of stray and rare visitors, and then returned to Murthly to hunt Woodcock in the great fern banks. "Jet" was very good at this class of work, and I have shot as many as twelve in a day, hunting solely for the birds that had bred on the estate. One day I had an extraordinary piece of luck (August 6th, 1885). Jet "pointed"

in a thick mass of bracken, and up got a brace of Woodcock, which I shot with a right and left. Hardly had I reloaded when another pair rose and likewise fell to my gun. I was again reloading and remarking to the head keeper, Keay, upon such a piece of luck, when a fifth bird rose, and fell dead to a long shot. The first four birds were all quick, but comparatively easy shots, but the fifth was long and a smart dodger. Such an unusual incident seldom falls to the lot of any sportsman, for it is extremely rare to find five full-grown Woodcock together and to bag them all.

It is by no means common, in England at any rate, to secure a right and left at Woodcock. On two occasions I think I could have performed the double event but for certain reasons. At the back of my house at Horsham there is a small strip of forest which in some seasons is a favourite resort of Woodcock in early winter. Shooting there one day in 1904 with a young friend, I flushed three Woodcocks in succession and killed them all, when a fourth rose and presented an easy shot. Instead, however, of going forward, this bird turned to the right towards a small open ride where my companion was walking, and, as I knew he had never killed a Woodcock, I left it to him. Alas, he missed it. On another occasion (January 1919) I was shooting with Mr. John Calder at West Weeting, Norfolk, when at one stand I killed a right and left at Woodcock, and then reloaded my gun just in time to get a third that came forward, saw me and "zoomed" upwards in an "Immelman turn" to my right. At the same moment as I took my eye off this bird, a fourth was seen

advancing straight towards me—a perfectly easy shot. Swinging the gun forward, I pressed the trigger of the left barrel. There was no answering discharge, for the spring of the lock had broken —a piece of bad luck, but perhaps fortunate for the Woodcock.

In the sporting papers one often sees accounts of unusual right and left shots, so I give the following curious doubles which have fallen to my gun during the past thirty years—

1884. Jan. 10th. Rock Pigeon and Golden Eagle. (The only one I ever shot, a young bird on migration.)
1885. A Velvet Scoter and an Eider.
1885. Aug. 9th. A Roebuck and a Snipe.
1885. Sept. 6th. A Partridge and a Blackcock.
1886. Jan. 4th. Glaucus Gull and Iceland Gull.
1886. Sept. 28th. Double right and left at Blackcocks.
1886. Dec. 6th. Golden Eye and Red-breasted Merganser.
1888. Oct. 20th. Two cock Capercailzie.
1888. Dec. 5th. Wigeon and Brent Goose.
1889. Nov. 1st. Capercailzie and Woodcock.
1889. Nov. 2nd. Wood-pigeon and Woodcock.
1890. Oct. 23rd. Hare and Golden Plover.
1890. Oct. 27th. Pheasant and Wild Duck.
1915. Sept. 3rd. Rough-legged Buzzard and Blue Hare.
1915. Sept. 10th. Raven and Snipe.

At Murthly in December 1888 I shot seven Teal with two barrels, and at Loch Leven on December

18th, 1885, eleven Teal in two shots, only one escaping from the flock.[1] One morning in January 1891 I fired two barrels in a packed flock of Godwits that passed the punt on the Dornoch Firth and picked up eighteen. But perhaps the most prolific shot I ever saw with a 12-bore was a double fired by a military doctor at Fort George in January 1891 at a big flock of Knots. He gathered forty-one.

The best day's Woodcock shooting I have seen occurred at Guisachan on November 22nd, 1890, when, as the guest of Lord Tweedmouth, I was one of the guns shooting the famous Fasnakyle Woods. The Woodcock were "in," and I have never seen so many before or since in Scotland in one day. Besides these birds, we also made a splendid bag of Roe, Grouse, Blackgame, Wild Duck, Pheasants, Reeves' Pheasants and other game. I was the top gun in one short beat above Fasnakyle House, and in the best position, as the Woodcock rose from springs in the centre of the birches and made straight up-hill before passing forward. I shot fifteen with sixteen cartridges in a few minutes, and in the whole day we secured forty-five.[2]

On the vexed question of whether Woodcock carry their young or not my experience is purely to the contrary. I have flushed hundreds of Woodcocks at the time when these birds had young ones, and have noticed great numbers going out to feed in the evening, and have never seen one carrying its offspring. Moreover, I have often disturbed them

[1] This was a red-letter day. I secured 107 duck by waiting in a reed-bed on the Reed Bour.

[2] As many as sixty-five have been killed there in one day.

from amongst their young, and noticed their distress and the curious method they have of hanging the legs and frilling out the large under-tail coverts, which might *give the impression* that they held *something* pressed close to the body.[1] Although I and many observers whose opinion is worth accepting have not seen such a thing as Woodcock carrying its young, nevertheless I do not wish to be dogmatic, and must confess that I have met individuals whose testimony was apparently reliable who have made out a good case in favour of the fact. No evidence on this question seems acceptable unless the observer has actually seen the parent bird *pick up* the offspring and bear it off, or when a Woodcock has been shot and the young one has fallen from its grasp.

On this subject my friend, Mr. Colin Maclean, who is an excellent observer of birds, thus writes—

"One afternoon about four o'clock, during the first week in June 1909, at Littlewood Park, near Alford, in Aberdeenshire, whilst walking through some rough grass and young bracken towards a large, open pheasant pen, which was enclosed with wire-netting eight feet high, I flushed a Woodcock, which flew off very heavily towards the pheasant pen. Apparently she could not rise high enough to clear the wire, and just before reaching it she dropped a young bird, subsequently rising above the wire and pitching in the pen. I ran up and secured the young Woodcock, which was almost as large as a Thrush.

[1] I have given an illustration of the appearance of the Woodcock under these circumstances in a book by Tom Speedy.

"When the old bird rose I noticed she flew very heavily and had great difficulty in rising, and after she had flown a few yards I realised that she was carrying a young one. She appeared to carry it between her thighs, and flew a distance of nearly twenty yards before dropping it. Two other young ones were subsequently found close together near the spot where I flushed the old bird, so that possibly she was brooding them when disturbed.

"This is the only occasion on which I have seen a Woodcock carry her young, though I have often flushed old birds when with a brood."

P. D. Malloch, who now owns one of the largest businesses in Scotland as an estate agent and fishing-tackle maker, was a close friend of mine in these early days. From small beginnings, he has prospered. Owing to his wonderful knowledge and experience in all matters relating both to sport and the natural history of fish and insects he is able to advise anglers from a practical point of view. What he does not know about Scottish lochs and rivers is not worth much, so many travellers to the north go to his place in Perth to profit by his words of wisdom. I have known him intimately for forty-six years, and we have had many happy days together on loch and river, and have derived much pleasure from our continuous friendship. As an angler I believe he has no superior, and as a sportsman is quite of the best, for I have often seen him *when fish were rising and he was catching them*, and whilst his comrades were having no luck, put down his rod and adjust the right flies on another

man's cast. No one but a sportsman of the best type would do this. He usually catches two trout whilst another man is getting one, and as a salmon angler has a wonderful insight of just the very spot where a salmon lies and how to present the line to the fish at just the right angle.

I remember one day a very irate tenant coming into his shop and roundly abusing Malloch for stating that he could catch eight or nine fish a day on a certain beat on the Earn which he rented. "The fish are there right enough," he roared, "but no one on earth can move one." Malloch, in his gentle manner, and without a semblance of annoyance, quietly explained to him how, when and where he ought to fish, what fly he should use, and many other significant details, which only seemed further to incense the disgruntled fisherman. He was unappeased. "I have tried them all, and not you nor any one else could move a fin of those sluggish brutes."

"Well, I think I could do so," suggested Malloch.

"All right," was the reply, "you can go and fish the water to-morrow."

In the evening I chanced to meet Malloch returning from his day on Dupplin. He had nine good fish. It was just an example of superior skill.

Malloch gave me my first commission as an artist at the age of thirteen. It was a picture of a Kingfisher, for which I received the princely sum of three and sixpence.[1] In 1886 the *Graphic* published two of my drawings, and then I began to illustrate books, for which, being a poor hand at business, I was sometimes paid and sometimes not.

[1] It is still his trademark for "Kingfisher" lines.

Seebohm, the naturalist, gave me the first good commission, and I did a number of illustrations for his monograph on the *Charadriidæ*, which, with my militia pay (I was then in the 3rd Battalion Somerset Light Infantry), enabled me to undertake the first serious expedition to foreign lands.

On this trip to Western America, then still a land of big game, I did a good deal of work upon large mammals as well as birds, and although it taught me something in the way of art and hunting, it fostered a spirit of restlessness and roving that has never left me. From the time I was a little schoolboy of eight I had always longed to be an artist and naturalist, and to hunt and explore in new lands. Like my friend Fred Selous, the book that influenced me was Baldwin's *African Hunting*.

This we used to have read to us by Mrs. Wemyss on Sunday afternoons in her house at Queen's Gate, when my brother and I and Hugo and Rosslyn Wemyss [1] would sit entranced and listen to adventures in Africa. My father, however, had other ideas, and was bent on my going into the Army. Like many other men who know the difficulties of their own profession, he thought any other a better one. So, much to my disgust, I gave in, and went to cram at "James."

"Jimmy" disliked me because I was always drawing Wapiti or Grizzly Bears in books on fortification, or taking French leave to go off to shoot and fish. Wherefore he prophesied a complete failure when the final exams. came, and no credit to himself. He always held up for our model a very nice fellow whom we will call X, and who

[1] Now Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss.

worked assiduously and never did anything wrong. He was his "star" pupil, whom disreputable people like myself, Fitzwilliam and Johnny Thynne [1] were always invited to copy. Shortly before the final exams. I absented myself without leave for a week, and "Jimmy" promptly sacked me, but as I took no notice of my dismissal, and returned to Lexham Gardens in the following week, things went on as usual, because the "chief" did not come round again and visit the rooms. Eventually when the lists came out and I heard I had passed (I was playing a salmon on the River Naver at the moment) there was one real joy to be experienced—I was several places ahead of the star.

Owing to the interest of Sir Garnet Wolseley (Lord Wolseley), I got a commission in the Scots Guards, in which I remained exactly four days, being then transferred to the 2nd Battalion Seaforth Highlanders.

At that time Army life in Edinburgh was very pleasant, and I was soon hard at drill and very happy in the companionship of the best set of men in the world. The British officer needs no eulogy from me, and I found my comrades all that I had expected of them.

When work was over there was much gaiety and dancing in those days, and in the autumn there was always plenty of leave for shooting and fishing. The Colonel was very generous about leave for sport, but could not see any other reason for its

[1] Lord John Thynne. He eventually got into the 10th Hussars, and was accidentally killed, owing to his horse falling on the tramlines in York. He was a charming personality, and one of the handsomest men I have ever seen.

application. I was always going off, but one day one of my brother officers, whom we christened "Von Moltke," a keen student of military history, and caring nothing for sport, asked for leave and was promptly refused. "What the devil do you want leave for?" said the Colonel sternly. "I shall not give it, you are wanted here."

In the autumn of 1887 I made ready to go to India, but on a vacancy occurring in the first battalion the Colonel asked me to take it, and so, much to my regret afterwards, I did so. About this time, too, I met Colonel Cumberland, who was about to undertake a long journey across Europe and Asia through the Pamirs down to India. At this time no one had made the expedition from the Russian side, and he asked me to accompany him. I applied to the War Office for permission, stating that I would make topographical maps of the whole route, which would have been of service to them, if I was "seconded" for a year. They granted the permit, and I was in the seventh heaven of delight; but just at the last moment the Colonel thought otherwise, and put in a veto on the grounds that I had not served long enough for such a privilege. The chance never occurred again, and the refusal was a great disappointment to me.

I served for five years in the Seaforths, during which time I published *Game Birds and Shooting Sketches*, which was a success owing to its being the first of those modern books dealing with the natural history of our islands. Late in 1892 I began to feel that moving from one country town to another and doing the usual round of military life was not my *métier*. I passed the exams. and

should have been a Captain in six months, but this did not prevent me from throwing up my commission and entering a new line of life. Moreover, a severe attack of influenza, followed by chronic sleeplessness, caused me great depression. So, much to my father's regret, I left the army and went off to South Africa to see something of the wild life on which I had always set my heart. Recently my uncle, Everett Gray, had died and left me a small legacy, and with this I bought a wagon and oxen and went off into the interior for a year's hunting.

Small things often change a man's life and profession, but I confess that I have never regretted the step I took that January morning in 1898, and thirty years of wandering and work at home are my ideal of freedom, with its contact with interesting things and people. Travel and the association which it brings with all kinds of men has always seemed to me the best education in the world, for it gives one the greatest sympathy with other people, and an insight into those problems of Imperial Unity which are, after all, the heart of England's greatness. To be a " Jack of all Trades " may not be the most profitable profession in a worldly sense, but at any rate I have found it the most interesting existence. In turn I have been soldier, sailor, a British Consul, artist, zoologist, author and landscape gardener, so life is altogether too short for all the things one would like to do; but if variety is the spice of life, and a living can be made, it is far better than grinding all one's days at an office stool to amass wealth, which, once gained, cannot always be enjoyed. The great thing in life is to live.

A GROUSE DRIVE IN SCOTLAND

*From a Drawing by the Author*

My usual plan of work is to take up six or seven subjects of interest and of which knowledge is deficient and to work at each until I have mastered the subject by careful reading and personal experience. In some cases this has involved an enormous amount of labour and travel. In the case of *Mammals of Great Britain and Ireland*, three volumes, I worked seven years at the book and its illustration, and undertook six small expeditions to gain a knowledge of one mammal, the Grey Seal, alone. Then there were four expeditions to hunt whales and to visit whale factories to study and draw the great Cetacea immediately after death, to say nothing of some twenty visits to outer islands of Orkneys, Shetlands, and the Hebrides to catch voles and other small creatures, as well as to all well-known areas in England in search of bats.

## CHAPTER III

### ICELAND—1889

PERHAPS there are few things that can imbue the soul of the enthusiastic traveller with a more wholesome sense of disappointment than to be told on arrival at the seaport from which he has contemplated taking his departure that there is a good chance of his ship being detained for an indefinite period. Such was the unwelcome news which greeted us—my sister Mary, my brother Geoff and myself, with some others—at Messrs. Slimon's office at Leith on our arrival there. We wanted to go to Iceland, but the owners were much afraid it would be impossible to get a ship's crew together, owing to the strike then prevailing all over Scotland, especially at Leith and Glasgow; and as we neared the quay, groups of men were to be seen lounging about everywhere, bent on stopping any sailor who might think of embarking on an outgoing vessel. However, during the afternoon we managed to get on board the *Majestic*, and things began to take a more hopeful turn, for the Captain had succeeded in getting two sailors from a ship that had just come into the Firth, and thought that, with the addition of a few landsmen and his engineer, he would be able to manage the voyage all right, provided we would entrust ourselves to his care. To this we

all agreed, being only too keen to start under any circumstances; and it was with feelings of no little relief that we steamed out of the firth in the still summer evening.

The following day we were off the coast of Sutherland, and were compelled to lie to under the shelter of Dunnet Head, owing to the tremendous tide running in the Pentland Firth, against which it was impossible to make any way. So, till the tide turned, we had to amuse ourselves as best we could by talking to crofters who came off in boats to hear the latest news. The rocks of this part of the Scotch coast are the resort in summer of thousands of Puffins, Razorbills and Shags, and these could be seen returning home in little parties from their fishing-grounds, bringing the spoils of the sea to their wives and families. Towards evening we were off again, heading away to the N.N.W., leaving the Orkneys looming in the distance behind us.

Our Captain Brown was a charming fellow, and, like the wind, always "on the beam." We should have quite taken him to our hearts, but for his fondness for sheep's-head. At our first dinner he asked if we liked sheep's-head, and our reply seemed to fill him with eminent satisfaction, for he had taken in a heavy cargo of this delicacy. But on the fourth day out, when sheep's-head soup, followed by the cranium that had supplied it, came on for the eighth time in succession, there was a general revolt, which was only quelled by the Captain's assurance that we should have a change the next day. On arriving at Reykavick the following morning, we breakfasted at the little hotel, but the Captain did not appear at the meal; he was, no doubt,

enjoying a royal feast of his favourite dish in his own cabin.

The journey on the whole—this time and later on—varied somewhat from the usual type of sea-voyages. All the passengers were good sailors, and all the crew were extremely ill, and we had to attend them with restoratives or the stoking would not have gone on. The stewardess, who had never been to sea before, entirely collapsed, and was invisible throughout the voyage, looked after by my sister Mary.

Birds were scarce; off Uist in Shetland I saw several Great Skuas, and a day later had my first sight of a party of six Buffon Skuas (*Stercorarius parasiticus*), which flew within fifty yards of the boat, so that I could make certain identification of the species. They were travelling close to the water, and their beautiful long tail-feathers gave these graceful sea-pirates a peculiarly rakish style.

Captain B. said that if I came to him on the bridge at half-past eight on the morning of the fifth day he could show me the first sight of Iceland. To the very moment there appeared some jagged spikes sticking up from the water away to the north. Presently we made Reykianase, the south-western corner of the island—a great mass of tumbled lava rocks rising to a height of 800 feet, and looking barren and inhospitable in the morning mists. Here a heavy tide ran, and swarms of gannets and small whales hunted the ubiquitous coal fish. Other birds were also numerous. Swarms of Kittiwakes wheeled and screamed; Great Skuas, with their owl-like flight, and Fulmars were plentiful, whilst strings of Brunnich's Guillemot, Razorbills and

Puffins darted like arrows across the waves towards the cliffs. Gay male Eiders with their brown mates were also in evidence, and everywhere were Cormorants and Shags. Away to the west, standing up bold and lonely in the ocean, was the Meal Sack Rock, known to naturalists as the last home of the Great Auk, and tenanted by these birds until 1835.

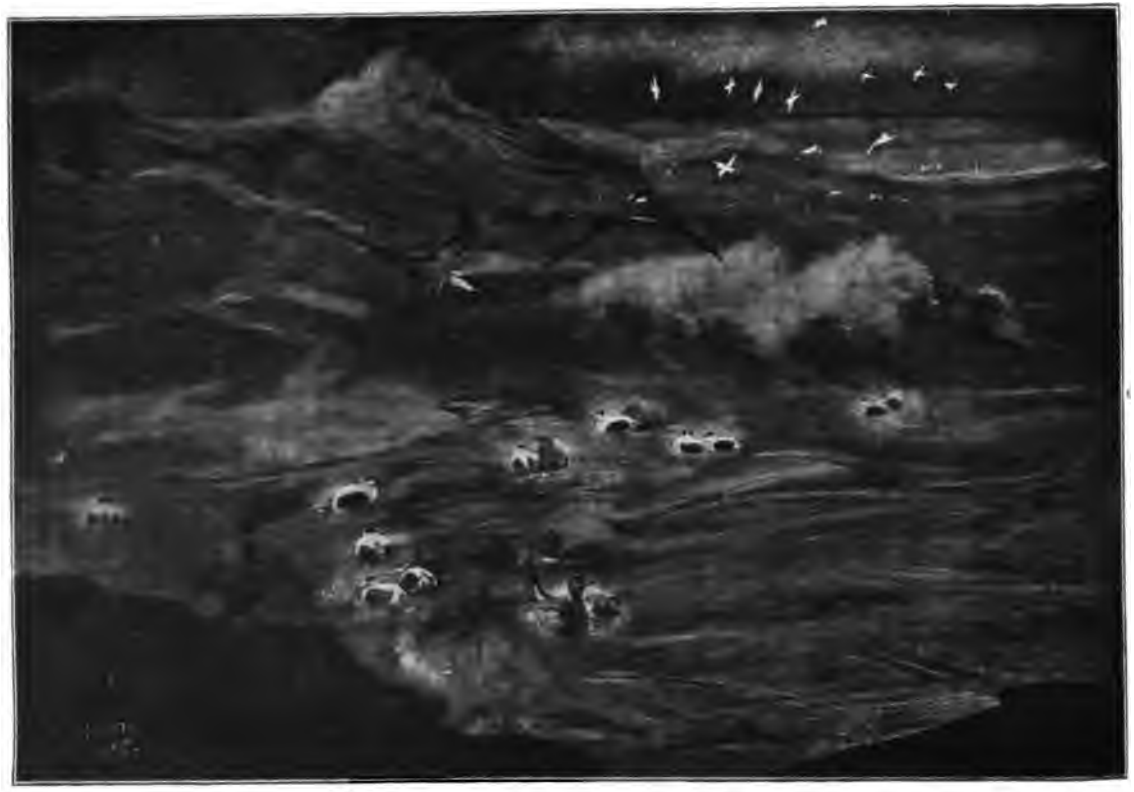
Reykavick is prettily situated in a small green harbour. To the north there is a long, low promontory, on which stands, fifty miles away, the imposing peak of Snaefell Jokul, 4701 feet high. To the north-east stretches the narrow Hvalfjord, crowned by the Akrafjall and the rosy-hued Esja.

We arrived at Reykavick, the capital of Iceland, on the 18th of June, but before going on shore I must say one word about our fellow-passengers. First, there was a charming old gentleman, Mr. B., who had undertaken the voyage to get rid of hay-fever, from which he was suffering. Iceland, he fancied, was the one place on earth where haymaking must be an impossibility; but on consulting a local guide-book, he amused us all very much by reading out that " haymaking and fishing were the principal industries of the Icelandic people." When we first went ashore, my sister and I strolled out on to some rocky ground covered with about an inch of scanty grass, when we were instantly attacked by a shock-headed youth, who warned us that we were treading down the hay crop! So on consideration we concluded that Mr. B. might possibly survive his trip to northern latitudes after all.

Then there was an Icelandic M.P., who, in his capacity of Minister of the Interior, took three helpings of the everlasting sheep's-head, the sight

of which made us all feel ill. He told us that he had five kroners (about 6*s.* 6*d.*) a day for his services when the Parliament was in session, and was evidently one of the bloated plutocrats of the place. Our other voyagers were an Irish doctor of urbane manners and city tastes, who complained bitterly that there never was a billiard-table on board ship to render life endurable, and a pale youth from Sheffield, who affirmed that "Ask nothing more" was the finest song in the English language, and would sing it.

Our intention was to remain a day in Reykavick and go on to Akureyri in the *Majestic*, which was to sail to the north of Iceland, picking up emigrants on the way, and this we did, since we could thus get to Myvatn, the home of ducks and big trout, without having to ride twice across the island, the central route being by far the most uninteresting part of the country. On landing, we were so fortunate as to secure the services of one Thorgrimmer Gudmansen, who had the reputation of being the best guide in Iceland, and one of the few men who knew the Myvatn rivers and lakes. He was to bring fifteen ponies with pack-boxes to meet us at Akureyri, which was to be our starting-point for the interior, in five days. A word about our guide. The Icelanders, like most island folk, are short in stature, but Thorgrimmer was an exception, being a big, powerfully built man of about six feet one. Like all Scandinavians, he was the essence of good-nature and amiability, with just one little weakness—he preferred to sit on a box and discuss sagas, literature, music, art and sport, to engaging in the hustle of packing or travelling. But he was such a



BIRD LIFE ON THE COAST OF ICELAND

*From a Drawing by the Author*

good-natured creature, and so well-read, that I fear we rather spoilt him, and let him talk and guide us whilst Geoff and I drove the ponies, packed boxes, erected tents and did the cooking. But these shortcomings and love of a *dolce far niente* existence were very venial faults, for when his services were really required, such as in the somewhat dangerous crossings of glacier torrents, in guiding, and in making things generally more comfortable and safe for my sister, he was an admirable helper, and all that we could desire.

Reykavick does not contain much of interest to the traveller. There was the usual shambling mass of wooden structures, the same as in all Norwegian sea villages, and after gazing for a few minutes in awe and admiration at the only policeman in Iceland, we felt that we had done the sights of the place, so took a boat and went off to see some bird life on the Island of Engay. Here we found nice little colonies of Arctic Terns and Eiders, whilst graceful little Red-necked Phalaropes flitted everywhere.

That night we steamed away north to Stickisholm, passing hundreds of beautiful little islands where Black Guillemots and Kittiwakes perched on all the pinnacles. Majestic, snow-covered glaciers hung in the distant clouds far inland, and the glassy sea was broken only by the rising pollock and saithe. Occasionally an old female Eider, with her young as deck passengers, swam out of the way of the steamer, and seemed nervous whenever the marauding Great Black-backs put in an appearance. Noisy Arctic Terns (here called Kria) floated like little grey fairies round the ship, or dropped into the still

waters after the sand eels. It was a typical Icelandic summer night, calm, warm and almost Italian in its pellucid clearness, and one could hardly imagine that only 250 miles to the west were the icebound shores, the Esquimaux and the Polar bears of East Greenland.

We took many emigrants on board at Reykavick, leaving their native land for Nebraska, where there is now a large and flourishing Icelandic colony. I noticed but little emotion amongst the people on leaving the home of their childhood, and this was probably accounted for by the fact that as a rule every member of a family joins the party—even very old men—and none are left to grieve about. There is a settled melancholy amongst all these northern races, due rather to their conditions of life than to their temperament, and there is no doubt that insufficient nourishment and bad air are mainly responsible for their pale faces and subdued ways. Here on board ship they all shut themselves up in the forecabin between decks, from which they carefully excluded the fresh air, to which they seem to have the strongest objection. A little boy chanced to sit on, and break, one of the skylights of the cabin, and the Captain in high glee said they would now be forced to get a little pure ozone. Not a bit of it. In less than two minutes the open space was completely stuffed up with eiderdown quilts, and the inmates of the cabin were happy once again.

It must not be supposed that the Icelanders are a particularly grave race. They are more cheerful, on the whole, than either the Norwegians or the Shetlanders, and considering the many weary

months they are forced to spend practically underground, it is a wonder that they are as gay and as healthy as they are. My sister observed that their superior education made them light-hearted, but the Captain said it was because they were so deuced glad to get into the open air again. See a party of Icelanders making hay. How they laugh and chatter, and how happy they are! "Results of honest toil," said Mary. "Yes, because the women do all the work, and the men have time to smoke," retorted the sarcastic man of ships, who maintained that the Icelanders were the laziest people on earth.

After leaving Stickisholm we steamed along the north coast of Iceland, passing splendid cliffs rising to 2500 feet straight from the sea. We sat on deck all night, and Geoff took some photos of the midnight sun. At three the North Cape was in sight, and after breakfast we were right abreast of this magnificent wall of rock rising straight and clear against the blue sky to a height of 3000 feet, the top being capped with snow. The North Cape of Iceland is a great bird station. The whole cliff-face is broken into ledges and inhabited by countless numbers of Brunnich's Guillemots, which at times simply blacken the air. With these birds were many Puffins, Black Guillemots and Razorbills, and as the steamer cut a lane through the floating thousands the flight of rising birds made a roar that sometimes lasted for several minutes.

À propos of these northern bird colonies, and as illustrating the kindred feeling which exists between the Scandinavian races and ourselves on the subject of sport, I may introduce the following. The scion of a royal continental house took with him on a

sporting expedition to the northern seas a Norwegian who, as events will show, was a much better sportsman than himself. Arrived at one of these breeding haunts, the great man found it fine practice to shoot the little Auks and Brunnich's Guillemots as they flew from their eggs on the cliffs, and when, after a bit, the poor creatures seemed disinclined to move, he sent the Norwegian up the rocks with a stick to assist their flight. After about twenty had been shot he continued to call for more, but the Norwegian came down and positively refused to lend himself any further to such wholesale slaughter. In telling the story he made his English hearers laugh by concluding with the words, "But what could you expect from a poor uneducated foreigner?"

Leaving the North Cape, it suddenly became bitterly cold, and the Captain said ice was very near, but that we should probably get along all right, as the early summer had been warm. This was the first northern trip of the season, and there was always the possibility that the ship would be unable to round the Cape, as had happened to our Captain in the previous year. He got blocked for fourteen days in the ice, and even then had to return to Reykavick without having effected a passage round the island. We were more fortunate, however, and reached Akureyri, our destination, on June the 22nd, after a very pleasant voyage.

The Captain kindly put us ashore in his boat. Jansen's Hotel, to which we went, was a strange place, consisting principally of a billiard-room where no one had ever played, and a few bedrooms of a primitive character. The host was an old

CROSSING THE FJORD AT AKUYRERI

German, and my sister won his heart by conversing with him in his own language, so we soon got something to eat. Before this, however, all the great people in the place had called on us, and Mary held a sort of levee in her bedroom, which kept overflowing into our wretched little band-boxes. The pastor, Mr. Jacomsen, was a charming man, and after breakfast took us to see what he called the most remarkable sight in Akureyri, which turned out to be simply a mountain-ash tree about as large as a gooseberry bush! We had many talks with this gentleman, who was a very clever man, and had translated Shakespeare into Icelandic, as well as producing many poems in his own tongue. He had also been a great traveller, and we were amused to find that in London the "hill of Highgate and the Alhambra Theatre" seemed to have left the most lasting impression on his mind.

After some difficulty with a harmless lunatic who called himself a guide and wanted to accompany us, Geoff and I hired two ponies and went for a ride up the beautiful valley that stretches away to the south. The scenery here was the best that we saw in Iceland, to some extent recalling the charms of Switzerland. Bird life was scarce, but we saw two Ravens, and beautiful little Snow Buntings sunning themselves on the rocks. Near the village were the usual White Wagtails and Red-necked Phalaropes. During the next two days we made short expeditions along the Eyja Fjord, and saw only flocks of Eiders and two pairs of Great Northern Divers. We found the Iceland ponies all we had heard of them, when once we had acquired the Icelanders' mode of riding and a few of his choicest

expressions to urge them on. I may say without hesitation that people in this country have no idea what a really good Iceland pony is like, simply because they have never seen aught but the useless stock that are annually shipped to Scotland and employed as hill carriers or in the mines. There is in Iceland a high-class breed which never leaves the country, and which the owners will not sell except at an exorbitant price; and these little rats will carry a huge man like Thorgrimmer Gudmansen for fifty miles a day, day after day, travelling the greater part of it over the merest apology for a track in the lava. Thorgrimmer's own pony, though twelve years old, could on occasion trot ten to twelve miles an hour, and looked a mite under its owner's long legs, which nearly touched the ground. Yet this and all the other ponies did some 800 miles' travelling with us in two and a half months, and lived on nothing but the extremely scanty herbage they were able to find amongst the rocks.

On the 23rd came Thorgrimmer, tired and dusty, having crossed Iceland, a distance of 300 miles, by the trail in five days. Pretty good going this—sixty miles a day for five days continuously, and driving fourteen ponies all the time—and a fine test of horse and human endurance. With him came one Jon, who was to be our pony-man; and an excellent and hardworking little chap we found him. He was often on the grin, and when spoken to seemed to enjoy his work amazingly, but his face when at rest was sad. He looked upon the expedition not as work, but as a holiday, said Thorgrimmer, for his wife had the reputation of being a shrew who

ruled him with a rod of iron when he was at home. He was, as they say in Scotland, "a man sair hudden doon."

Long hours spent in chasing refractory ponies, and the conviction of the hollowness of all earthly pleasures save "aqua vitæ" (kummell) and tobacco, had given to Jon a solemnity of expression, and oblivious of the fact that suspenders were necessary to keep trousers in their proper position, he was for ever pervading the landscape in a certain wild and buttonless freedom that was wholly repellent to our sense of modesty, or holding these same garments in position with the only hand not temporarily engaged—a form of dressing that I need hardly say was generally unsuccessful.

It was late in the afternoon of the 24th before we were ready to start on our long ride, but, time being of no object in Iceland, we soon began to adopt the manners of the country, and to move whenever things were ready, and not when it was time to start. We crossed the lovely fjord in a boat, and Thorgrimmer drove the pack-ponies across the mouth of the river, so we met on the hillside, saddled up and made a start up the mountain. It took some hours to ascend, and then we had a lovely view of the Eyja Fjord and the surrounding hills. Akureyri looked a tiny cluster of wooden huts, and we said good-bye to this last trace of civilisation as we went over the crest into a great barren world of rocks and lava. We stopped once, about seven, for rest and refreshment, and then pushed on to Lyosvatn (the Lake of Light), where we intended to camp. Near the lake was a good piece of turf, so Geoff and I galloped on to choose a suitable spot

for the tents; but, as the old saying is, "more haste, less speed." My pony, a young grey, thought it desirable to cross its forelegs, with the result that we came an imperial cropper, much to the amusement of the rest of the party. That evening I killed a Whimbrel as Geoff was erecting the tents, and my pony having now learned to stand fire, and even allow me to shoot off his back, I forgave him for giving me such a hard toss. We had ridden about forty-five miles, so took a day off, as is always desirable after a start on any expedition. It allows everything to settle down, although the wonderful little ponies showed no sign of fatigue after their continuous work of the past week. I saw Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, Wigeon and Sclavonian Grebe on the lake, and the first pair of Iceland Falcons soaring high in the air. The next day we passed through mountainous country, hoping to make that night the Skalfandi Laxa, of which Thorgrimmer had given a glowing account as a place of great trout.

During the afternoon an exquisite piece of wild scenery presented itself in the magnificent waterfall of Godafoss—in form a small Niagara in its way, but without that great cataract's distasteful surroundings. There were no shrieking hackmen, no solicitous photographers and no vulgar buildings to offend the eye and oppress the senses—only a great roar of yellow waters fresh from the virgin snows. Here the only sounds that rise above the thunder of the torrent are the melancholy wail of the Golden Plover and the babbling cry of the Whimbrel, and they are a charming and natural accompaniment of so grand a scene. After leaving

Godafoss we passed over undulating moorlands, where were many Golden Plover and Whimbrel, and now and again we heard the calls of the cock Ptarmigan "jarring" to his mate.

The Whimbrel should be the Icelandic national crest. In the northern wilds he is absolutely ubiquitous, and he never allows one to forget that he is there. Neither by day nor night do his calls cease. Each pair takes upon itself the duty of escorting the traveller from his beat on to the next. So one is being continuously handed on for days together, and listening to their monotonous and yet not unmusical cry. It was like Mark Twain's jodelling peasant—the first time you heard the call you felt inclined to offer the bird a kroner to do it again, and the next one you still loved to the extent of half a kroner; but after listening for a week to nothing but continuous Whimbrel jodelling you had some difficulty in suppressing your murderous tendencies. Thorgrimmer had once before escorted a traveller to the Skalfandi Laxa and Myvatn, and whilst saying that he was no fisherman, yet he had caught several trout in the river, and all about five pounds. This was a big weight for trout to average, and notwithstanding the fact that our guide was a thoroughly reliable man, I was still inclined to be a bit sceptical about these fish. As soon as we sighted the river I made all haste to put up my trout rod and get something for supper, whilst the others erected the tents and made ready.

Arrived at the stream, which was a glacier one, the colour of pea-soup, I thought it looked most unpromising. There was, too, a great rush of water,

and none of those eddying swirls of slow, rippling flats that every fisher expects to find in the home of trout. I wandered down the river looking for likely places, and taking a cast now and then in a somewhat perfunctory manner, yet not a fin did I see move. Moreover, I was having my first introduction to the Icelandic black fly, a creature of such stinging powers and detestable familiarity that it is unequalled in the world as a human pest. These little beasts soon covered my face and hands and stung me on all exposed parts, so whilst I fished with one hand it soon became a habit to slap with the other. After half an hour of this torture, and no signs of fish, I began to get cross and inwardly to swear at Thorgrimmer. Yet somehow I did not like to return to camp without anything to show, so wandered on for an hour, till I had made up my mind that I was an idiot who might as well be flogging the Serpentine. However, there was one quietish corner—the first I had seen —I would just try that and then go home and acknowledge defeat. My last cast; the line tightens, there is a splendid head and tail rise, and I am "in" to a good trout if ever there was one. He fought well, rushing out in the heavy water and keeping there, backwards and forwards, down, across and up stream. Oh, if I should lose him now, how they would chaff me in camp, for much depends on the "kudos" of a first fish! It was a good quarter of an hour before I had him dead beat and back into the comparatively still pool where I had hooked him. What a beauty he looked as he lay over on his spotted side and I drew him slowly towards me! But no, he was not done yet; he must

THIRTY TROUT CAUGHT IN THE SKALFANDI LAXA, 175 lbs.

have another run or two, though, thank goodness, he had not sufficient strength left to gain the heavy stream. At last he came to the surface, and I drew him straight to the pebbles, slipped my fingers into his gills and raced for camp with a five-pounder. How we enjoyed that wretched fish! It was delicious. I even apologised to Thorgrimmer for doubting his word as to the size of the Laxa fish, and he assured me in reply that I would get better ones than that the next day.

On the following day, Geoff went down-stream and I up the river. We each found a good swim, and by midday had had enough of the flies and the fishing. The place I had selected was a rippling shallow in the centre of the stream, and I had to wade above my knees to reach the place where the fish were lying and then throw a long line. The trout were not numerous, but were all big, and seldom refused the grilse-sized Silver Doctor, which seemed to have an especial attraction for them. The only troubles were the flies, which were, of course, maddening in the heat of the day, and the fact that I only had a light eleven-foot trout rod. There is little doubt that with a salmon or grilse rod twice as many fish would have been taken, for the time occupied in playing each fish on such light material was not less than ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, though it certainly prolonged the amusement. When we met, Geoff had seven fish and I had eight—my best over six pounds—weight of all about seventy pounds. Such fishing is not to be had every day, so we decided to make another attack on the trout, especially as an old farmer appeared and begged us to catch some for his winter supply,

as he had no means of doing so himself. Changing beats, I went down the river, accompanied by Thorgrimmer, a pony and a sack, and fished for three hours on a boiling flat just above a beautiful waterfall and near to a lake from which the river debouched. There were more trout here than at the upper station, and I fished hard and had some grand sport. It was necessary during this time to halter the pony, both hind- and fore-legs, to prevent his running away, and after two hours Thorgrimmer left me, saying he refused to be eaten alive. This fishing-place was only about 110 yards long, and going over it twice I secured seventeen trout, one of which, if he had been in better condition, would certainly have touched eight pounds. Geoff got five on his beat. Here is a photo of this morning's sport taken by my brother, which, although not very clear, shows the size of the fish.

Down the river were many Harlequin Drakes in parties of from three to twelve. They are amongst the most lovely birds of the duck tribe, and were very tame, allowing the intruder to approach within a few yards. It was curious to see how they loved the roughest places in the rivers. Apparently no rapid was too swift or waterfall too tumultuous for them. In one eddy, where it was barely possible for anything to live, a party of cock Harlequins were swimming about or perching on a stone amidst the boiling waters. Places that other ducks would shun they seem to revel in, and sometimes, to our astonishment, they stayed for hours in apparently untenable situations. In flight, too, the Harlequins are somewhat extraordinary. They never by any chance cut off corners of land in

making from one sheet of water to another, as their cousins, the Golden-eyes, and all other surface-feeding and diving ducks will do. On the contrary, they keep exactly above the line of the winding waters, adopting a swinging motion, and passing to left and right in the flight over the stream in all its windings. The male Harlequin has a peculiar cry, not unlike that of the common Lapwing in spring.

Another very interesting bird whose acquaintance I made for the first time was Barrow's Golden-eye, a larger and more handsome creature than our own Golden-eye, but similar in its habits. They were very tame, both males and females, and a week later at Myvatn I caught two with a fly-rod and shot one with a catapult.

In these northern wilds I found the catapult—not the clumsy round-elastic weapon of the country schoolboy, but the scientific and small, square-elastic tweaker—a great aid in obtaining a few specimens where birds were numerous and fairly tame; in fact, I never cared to disturb the whole place by firing off a gun unless absolutely necessary to procure some rare and shy species. With the little silent weapon I secured during this trip one Golden Plover, one Long-tailed Drake, one Barrow's Golden-eye, one Ptarmigan, four Purple Sandpipers, three Dunlins, and four Red-necked Phalaropes. I nearly got a female Black Scoter—a tough bird to kill—but she recovered after being knocked down, and commenced diving, so my other shots with the catapult were unavailing.

Late in the evening of June 29th we made a start for Myvatn (the Fly Lake), said to be the great

breeding station in Iceland of all the northern wildfowl. The route from the Skalfandi Laxa to Myvatn winds in and out of rocky mountains. By midnight we had reached the lake, and rode along its reeded shores enjoying the landscape. Away to the north the blue waters, studded with green islands big and little, stretched for some ten miles, the water-line on the horizon being bounded by low, rocky mountains. Altogether the whole place reminded me strongly of our own Scotch paradise of the ducks, Loch Leven, and I looked instinctively for the romantic old castle and the Reed Bour. Thorgrimmer guided us to a spot where the Skalfandi River, here much reduced in size, leaves the lake and, passing through a series of long pools, becomes gradually a rushing river. In these miniature lakes were congregated hundreds of Scaup and Long-tailed Ducks, and amongst them a goodly sprinkling of other species, such as Mallard, Teal, Wigeon, Pintail and Barrow's Golden-eye. On the big lake I noticed two or three pairs of Whooper Swans, Sclavonian Grebe, Great Northern Divers and Black Scoter.

While erecting the tents, a charming old lady, part-owner of the farm, came to pay her respects to my sister, whom she seemed to regard with the most intense curiosity, being the first English lady she had ever seen. We were all dead tired, yet she refused to take the hint that we would show her all our curiosities in the morning; so we went off to bed, leaving my sister to the tender mercies of the old lady's questions. After a bit, Mary could stand it no longer, and retired to her Wolsely mattress, and sinking into slumber, had faint

recollections next morning of being lulled to sleep by such queries as, " What's this for? Oh, beautiful, beautiful! Nice clothes. Yes, yes, yes. How you wear this? " etc., etc. Poor old dear! She was just a daughter of Eve, after all, and yet had never known the feminine delight of flattening her nose on the plate-glass windows of Bond Street. Yet the instinct was there all the same, and she already envied the possessor of a real sponge and a better brush and comb than she had ever known.

## CHAPTER IV

### ICELAND, 1889

In general appearance the Icelanders are typical Scandinavian, but, owing to their long isolation and intermarriage, are certainly a slightly deteriorated form of the original stock. A physically fine Icelander is difficult to find, but a mentally active individual is common. It is doubtful if amongst the nations of the world a better read or more widely informed class exists amongst the peasants than in this wild northern island. A labouring man understanding several languages is no rarity, and the traveller is much struck by the heterogeneous mixture of general information acquired by a people who have never been beyond their own farms and have seen but very few travellers. Except in places like Reykavick, there are no elementary schools, and yet a child of nine that cannot read is practically unknown. This is all due to the excellent system of home teaching and the high respect in which all learning is held by these intelligent and amiable folk. During the long winter months, when the people are forced to live in their insanitary burrows beneath the ground—in many cases opening into, or adjoining cattle-sheds—each member of the family takes up some art, such as the wood-carving of household vessels, or makes a study of some foreign tongue, either English,

French, German or Danish. They soon become proficient, and impart their knowledge gradually to the other members of the household. The Icelanders are proud of their learning and their literature, and are never weary of listening to stories concerning the ancient history of the island. Their historic records have been carefully kept since an early age, and the curious phases of life which have determined the existence of this little Teutonic community for a thousand years are of impressive interest to a people proud of their unbroken record. The language of Iceland most nearly represents that of the early Teutonic fathers, and has not been so changed phonetically as the Norse and Danish languages have been through contact with the nations of the south.

The history of Iceland goes back to the year 870, when the country became known for its poets and singers, who travelled to the distant Courts of Europe. The Heroic Age succeeded this date and lasted for some four hundred years, during which colonists from our Western Isles and from Norway settled in the country. It was during this period of the Commonwealth that the events embodied in the earlier and later sagas are said to have taken place. According to the popular belief, Christianity was introduced in the year 1080, and with it came peace, great ecclesiastical organisation and a slight phonetic change in the original language. Then followed the first and second civil wars, which lasted until the fall of the great houses in 1258, after which the Icelanders made submission to the Norwegian kings. Thus came the second period, an age of Mediævalism, which lasted for

two hundred and fifty years, resulting in the death of old traditions and the birth of mediæval poetry in their place. In 1420 Iceland passed through what is known as the Dark Age. She became isolated from Norway and the continents, and only English trade was carried on. The third period commenced with the Reformation. Another subsequent Danish monopoly began in 1580, and after the Renaissance the country experienced a frightful series of disasters, which lasted from 1640 to 1783.

First came the attacks of pirates from the south, though what loot they expected to get in those northern barrens nobody seems to know. In succession several vessels came all the way from Algeria to kill, to ravage, and to burn, and committed wholesale destruction along the southern coasts and on the Westmann Islands. This scourge was immediately followed by the introduction of smallpox, then raging in the Courts of Europe (1707), and one-third of the total population died in consequence. After this, in 1759, came a great famine, in which no less than 10,000 people died of starvation, and, to make matters worse, a plague appeared amongst the sheep in 1762. The Great Eruption of the whole of the volcanoes took place in 1783, and destroyed a considerable portion of the country, and the land only seems to have taken a turn for the better when travellers made the island better known in 1800.

Since the beginning of the last century Iceland may be said to have entered on its fourth phase—a period of increasing prosperity. Many Icelandic scholars have travelled abroad, and the wealth and general condition of the people has materially

advanced under the auspices of Home Rule and Free Trade. Now, too, that the world has become better known, and that facilities are given to tillers of the soil to move to other lands, the Icelanders are annually taking more and more advantage of the opportunities for emigration.

They have founded a fine colony in Nebraska and are prospering there, and it is more than probable that as years go on and the emigrants begin to return with tales of prosperity in a new home beyond the seas, most of the inhabitants will work their way to the Canadian north-west and leave the old country to the few fishing-folk who dwell along the coast. The centre of Iceland is barren and worthless for farming purposes, and the day must come when it will be absolutely deserted.

This is briefly the history of Iceland and the past and present condition of her people. It is always a pity to see the old order of things, with the romance and reverence that attached to them, banished by the new and restless spirit of the age; but to their new home the Icelanders take with them the memory of many things that do not die. In the long summer evenings, instead of the stifling burrows reeking with peat smoke, they sit outside the cabin doors of the West and still teach their children the legends of Odin and Thor and sing of the great deeds of *Skalla-Grim* and *Thoroef*, of *Olaf the White* and the beauty of his Queen, and above the whirr of the old hand-loom still rises the plaintive crooning of the Icelandic mother as she sings to her little ones the *Flyting of Loki*, the *Lay of Skirni*, and the *Lay of Harbard*. The woods of

Nebraska no longer echo the war-chant of the Pawnees, but only gentle voices are heard singing the *Battle of Hafur-firth* and the *Death of Ivar*.

To return now to my sister, whom we left in the last chapter in deep converse with the owner of the Myvatn farm. When we woke up in the morning the old lady was still at it—scanning with eager eye every article of Mary's wardrobe, and audible above the cry of the birds came, "How much that cost? Will you sell that? What?—no! This, love, pretty, pretty. Like see looking-glass again."

When my sister awoke she found her hostess carefully unpacking her tin box and examining its contents one by one; and not wishing to deprive her of so much innocent amusement, she allowed her to go on while she herself engaged in dressing. Even at breakfast, which we all had together, the old lady could not refrain from admiring several of the choicest articles which she had retained in her lap for closer inspection. It was wonderful how well she understood English, considering the fact that she had not seen a dozen English-speaking people in her life, and that she owed her knowledge of the language entirely to the winter home-teaching. In the end we discussed business. I asked leave to shoot a pair of all the different kinds of ducks, saying that I would pay one kroner apiece for each bird; and to this she readily assented, saying that I could shoot what I liked, but that, out of courtesy, permission was necessary from her son, who was part-owner of the farm. This gentleman, a very sulky sort of fellow, turned up, and, after much interpretation through Thorgrimmer, said I

might shoot the ducks, but must pay him ten kroners apiece for them. This was outrageous, and I refused to pay such a sum. He went away in a huff, but returned in half an hour saying that the tariff of ducks at Myvatn was seven kroners apiece. Seeing that I had received permission to shoot from the old lady, I suggested that two kroners was a good price for a wild duck, and that, unless he consented to this tariff, I should go out and shoot his mother's ducks at this price and leave his alone. Again he departed, saying something angrily, of which we took no notice, and again the diplomatic Thorgrimmer brought him back just as I was leaving camp with my gun. The market price of wildfowl at Myvatn was now reduced to four kroners a bird, but that was still a bit too high; so, to save further argument, I told the old lady that I was now going to shoot some of her one-kroner ducks, at which she laughed immoderately at her pettish boy.

In the evening, as I was skinning a cock Pintail and had three other duck lying close by, the financier came and had the impudence to ask for forty kroners; but I refused to do any business with him, either in this way or as to the dairy produce that we had from his farm. After that our transactions were conducted with the old lady. The real trouble, we presently found out, was that in Myvatn and elsewhere we were bent on establishing a precedent—the precedent of living in our own tents, contrary to the advice of Thorgrimmer, who had again and again endeavoured to dissuade us. All previous travellers in this part of Iceland had made use of the farmhouses that dot the country,

although in most instances they are quite unfit for ladies to sleep in. Of course, men can rough it anywhere; but when it is known that more than half of these dwellings, though well constructed to keep in the warmth, shut out all possibility of the light and air, whilst many of the beds are tenanted by superfluous visitors, residence in houses is not an unmixed joy. So we took our own tents, and stuck to them, in spite of Thorgrimmer's constant assertions that we should be starved to death in that cold climate, to say nothing of the rains that no tent could withstand. Of course, none of these things happened. We were all fairly comfortable, only suffering slightly from cold at times, and when thoroughly chilled it is wonderful how warm you can get by creeping into your snug Wolsey mattress or reindeer bag.

The reasons that led Thorgrimmer to so strongly recommend the houses of his friends were obvious; but there was no fault to find with him on that account, for it has always been the custom for travellers to stay at farmhouses and the people to reap some monetary return thereby. Wherever we went poor Thorgrimmer, I believe, got pitched into by the people for allowing us to come to their farm in tents in so horribly independent a fashion.

We remained for a week by the Fly Lake, daily tortured by the abominable flies, and had to engage the financier to help Jon in looking after the ponies, as they were liable to stampede off to the hills and get lost. To give one instance of the attacks of these flies on the horses. Wishing to go to a distant part of the lake, I asked Jon to bring the

ponies close to the water that I might get my usual riding nag. After breakfast I strolled out and saw a bunch of ponies close by, all of them being black or pied, and was going to pass on, thinking they belonged to the farm, when Jon, surrounded by a halo of insects, arose from behind a rock and asked me which pony I wanted to ride. My white pony had been transformed into a black one, being literally covered with black flies.

There is more than one instance of flies having killed ponies, and some weeks later, when we stood at the other end of the lake, one of our ponies had a hole eaten in his neck as big as a half-crown, and if this had not been discovered, and the animal had been allowed through an oversight to remain tethered a little longer, he would doubtless have been killed by the insects. This is the usual practice of these terrible little creatures. They settle on a pony and simply wear him out till he is so tired that he can no longer kick, bite or swish his tail. A mass of flies, owing to the pony's difficulty in reaching them, get in their most deadly work, especially if the little horse is hobbled. They then fix on one spot, generally high up on the side of the neck between the windpipe and the vertebræ, and suck and suck till they have made a hole you can put your finger into. In the particular case of our own pony which they had attacked, there was a solid cake of flies all eating their way into the flesh to the depth of an inch and a half.

The bird life of Myvatn is a great delight to the ornithologist. In our own Scottish lakes and seas we can see and hunt many of the northern ducks, but there they only come to us for the most part

as shy winter visitors, and only occasionally can we sit down quietly and study their interesting habits. Here all was different. Our camp was placed on the banks of a stream where the Long-tailed Ducks, the Barrow's Golden-eyes and the Scaup fed and played within a few yards without the slightest sign of fear, and but for the flies it would have been delightful to lie in the sun and watch them.

One evening, as I strolled up the river to catch a trout for supper, I saw something that was quite new to me. I was sitting on a high bank preparing a cast of trout flies when a pair of Richardson's (Arctic) Skuas came sailing up the stream, on the banks of which five or six female Long-tailed Ducks were sitting with their newly-hatched broods. All these ducks crouched as if frightened of the Skuas, and at the same moment another Long-tailed Duck came rushing across the river with all her babies following in a bunch behind her. In a second both Skuas dashed down, and one of them picked up a duckling, and, as far as I could see, swallowed it alive and kicking. Meanwhile the maternal duck had reached the shallows, and erected her breast for a moment to keep off the other Skua. But it was only for a minute. The marauder, much too active for her, picked up and swallowed a youngster before the terrified mother's eyes. I had no idea that Skuas were such destructive creatures to the young birds of other species, and the fact is not mentioned in any Natural History with which I am acquainted. Yet this scene of murder must be of frequent occurrence in the summer time where the Skuas have few gulls and

terns to chase and must prey upon something to obtain a living.

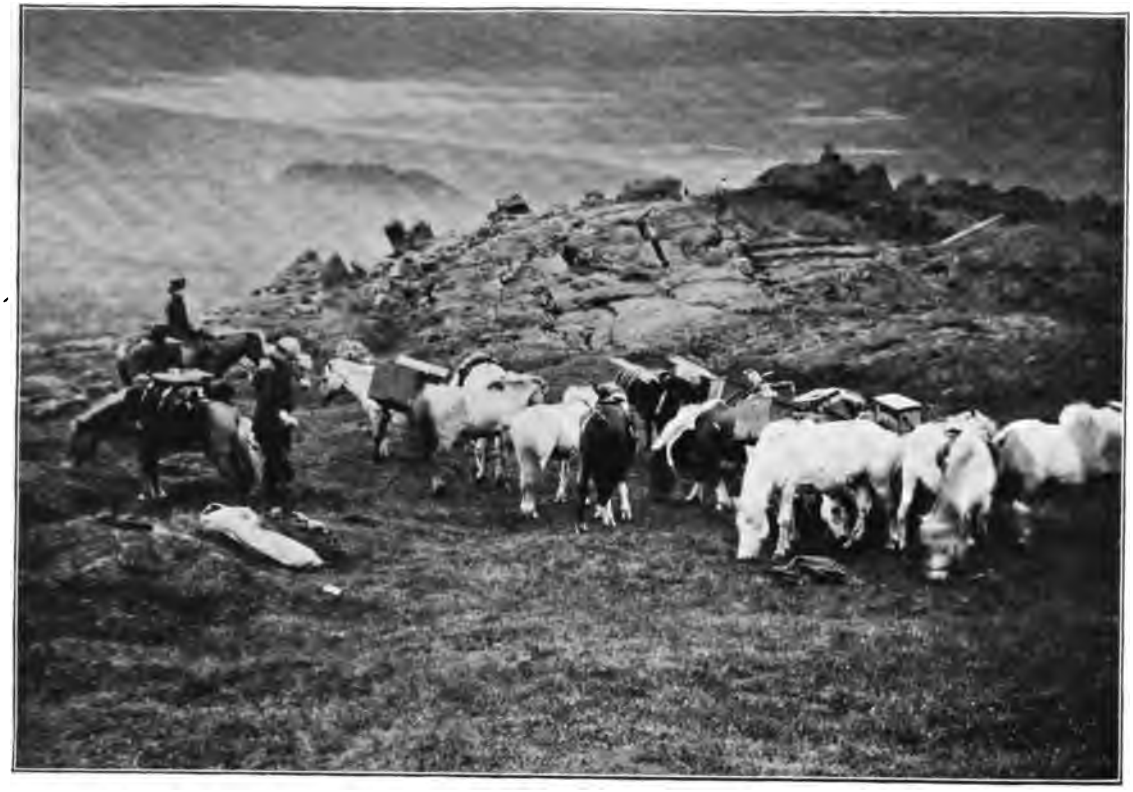
From our camping-ground I daily witnessed the attacks of the gallant Iceland Falcons on the ducks. Three or four old birds, with their young in attendance, evidently undergoing a preliminary training, visited the stream at least once a day, and twice I actually saw them make a kill. Like the Peregrine, they would many times make practice stoops at passing ducks, and then veer off as if they had dashed downwards for a bit of fun. In flight the Iceland Falcons are very bold and daring. They passed by our tent twice within a few yards, and I could easily have killed one had I wished to do so, but it was much more enjoyable to see their graceful aerial movements. In the evening, after having fed, a pair were generally to be seen soaring high in the clouds and behaving as all Eagles and Buzzards do—often stooping and playing with one another in jest.

But by far the finest ornithological sight we witnessed was at breakfast time one morning, when a magnificent White-tailed Eagle came slowly flapping along from the direction of the lake and following the line of the stream. The commotion amongst the ducks was intense. Every mother that as yet had no children and all the unattached drakes came scurrying along before the great scavenging coward of the air. A stream of some 1500 or 2000 ducks passed our camp in one confused mass, all flying low, and most of them just above the water, in evident terror. It was a royal procession indeed. Doubtless the eagle would catch a helpless flapper or two later in the season, but

at present the fears of the ducks were groundless; for at the moment he had no wish for anything beyond a big trout, and this he presently found basking in the shallows of a still pool about three hundred yards below. What a splash his clumsy majesty made as he entered the water! One would think that any fool of a fish must have seen his coming; but no, he had got a beauty of three pounds or thereabouts, and it was kicking to relieve itself as it sent a shower of golden spray into the light. The bird of Jove, having now got his dinner, made straightway for a neighbouring mound close to the river bank. For a moment I half entertained an idea of stalking him, which I fancy was easy, but, on second thoughts, I left him in peace to enjoy the dinner, and contented myself with watching him through the telescope.

This bird and his mate visited us daily, and did not appear to molest the ducks, although they seemed to live in greater terror of him than of their really formidable enemy, the falcon. The eagles selected a long, still swim, or lake pool, and beat up and down it at a considerable height; and we did not again observe either of the birds descend on a fish.

Another bird whose nest I wished to discover was the Black Scoter, and after two days' hunting in a lake marsh I at last almost stepped on a female, whom I was obliged to shoot in the interest of science. There seemed to be not more than a dozen pairs of these birds altogether, and of the Gadwall I saw nothing at all. Other interesting birds that I saw at our first Myvatn camp were a pair of pied ravens. Doubtless in time, from iso-



ICELAND PONIES

lation and interbreeding, the Icelandic Raven may show the same tendency towards albinism that the Faroe birds do; but all the other ravens that I saw in Iceland were of the normal colour. I tried very hard to shoot one of these pied birds, but never succeeded in getting nearer than one hundred yards, owing to the flat nature of the tundra.

On July 3rd we moved on to the north end of the lake to a farmhouse called Reykalid, and thence trekked on over a great barren country, half desert, half mountain, till by midnight we reached a lonely farm with an unpronounceable name, ending with the usual vatn—in English the Lake of the Eternal.

Whilst Geoff was putting up the tent I went down to the lake-side to draw some water, and there a sight met my gaze which filled me with strange longing and regret—a regret that I had not brought my rifle—for there, as plain as feet could make it, was the perfectly fresh spoor and sign of a good herd of wild reindeer.

Thorgrimmer had admitted that there were reindeer here, but deprecated the taking of a rifle, as they were so scarce as rarely, if ever, to be seen, being few in number and ranging over a big country. Like a fool I had listened to him and left my rifle at Akuyreri, so my feelings as a keen hunter may be realised when next morning, as we rode off in a sandstorm to the waterfall of Dettifoss, we came plump up against two reindeer bucks, lying on a little mound within seventy yards! At first they absolutely refused to run away, but stood and tried to stare us out of countenance. One was a fine fellow with a really

splendid head, and I watched him trotting slowly away with disgust that can be more easily imagined than described.

Dettifoss was so magnificent that it almost compensated for the loss of the reindeer. It was a truly grand sight to the lover of fine scenery, almost worth going to Iceland to see. An immense volume of glacier water leaps through a narrow chasm of rocks and falls into a boiling cauldron some three or four hundred feet below. The sun came out just as we arrived and exquisite rainbows appeared in the rising spray, whilst over all hung a splendid White-tailed Eagle, as if especially sent there by the Creator to add the one artistic touch to this great natural picture. We left Dettifoss the peerless with feelings of regret. There is a strange fascination about a great cataract in wild surroundings that all must feel—notably the unutterable littleness of all things human compared with the works of the great Creator.

The ponies did a good run back to Myvatn—sixty-five miles in under ten hours—and we made camp near Reykalid in the worst spot on earth for flies. By this time Geoff and I had become in a small degree hardened to their attacks, and had given up veils after the first day, because under these coverings one could see nothing of the country, nor even a trout rise. The Icelanders seemed to feel the flies more keenly than we did, and they seldom came near the lake or the river unless obliged to do so. But here we saw the children of the Reykalid farm eating the flies wholesale which they picked off their faces. The flies are very sweet, like little lumps of sugar, and,

as they are constantly getting in your mouth, you are forced to eat a few of these natural lollipops whether you like them or not.

Near this camp was a beautiful little colony of Sclavonian Grebes and their nests—six all in a line together. The birds were very tame, and allowed one to approach within six yards without leaving their nests, which they never failed to "cover," however frightened they might be. Not so tame, however, were they as some Red-necked Phalaropes that I came across. Whilst sitting on a big stone making a sketch of the Grebes' nests I became aware of a gentle "cheeping" noise that sounded now near, now far away. Being engrossed in my work, I took no notice of it for some time, when I observed a male Phalarope running busily amongst the rough heather and catching flies, with which his beak was already almost full. Though accustomed to the extraordinary tameness of these charming birds, I was not prepared for such familiarity as this little creature exhibited—coming nearer and nearer till he looked up anxiously in my face from the point where my right leg was resting. I kept perfectly motionless, and felt glad that I had not been shifting my position, for presently a little downy ball suddenly leaped up and ran over my boot to his father, who fed him with flies. Now looking down, I saw another youngster lying in the space between my legs, and close beside it a depression and broken eggshells showing where the Phalarope's nest had been. In a short time the parent bird, which kept running backwards and forwards all the time catching flies, within a few feet, became so sure of my harmlessness that, after

some little hesitation, he came right up to the little one immediately between my legs and fed it there. I doubt very much if such remarkable tameness is to be found in any other feathered creature in existence. The Red-necked Phalarope is an extraordinary bird in many ways. Besides being a wader and having webbed feet like the Coot, it is polyandrous. The female has two husbands, and after the young are hatched one or other of these domestic gentlemen undertakes the whole duties of tending the young. The female is also by far the more beautiful of the two sexes, and to this reason we may possibly trace the plurality of mates, seeing that the handsome males of the Game or other birds are polygamous.

As already mentioned, the ponies had done a big march of sixty-five miles on this day, and yet, since they were only loosely hobbled on the forelegs, they managed to run away seven or eight miles to the hills to escape the flies. Next day we moved back to the Skalfandi Laxa, where I got nineteen big trout of over 5½ lbs. each in the swim above the waterfall, and, continuing our journey the following day and into part of the night, reached the Eyra Fiord opposite Akuyreri after a ride of fifty miles.

Here my sister thought it a good opportunity to go to Jansen's and have a bath; but this the people seemed to regard with some suspicion as an intention to introduce innovations they had never heard of before. However, after a good deal of talk, the good pastor, Jacomsen, came to the rescue, and she was told that she might have a bath in four hours' time *in the hospital three doors off*.

We had some difficulty in crossing the fiord next morning without getting soaked, as the water almost reached the ponies' withers, and Geoff was in fear and trembling lest it should reach his beloved camera and plates. Nowadays photographers have many advantages in using lighter materials and better films; but when my brother took the photos that appear in this book he had many difficulties to contend with, both in the packing of glass plates and in their subsequent development, all of which was done on the spot. So when we crossed the somewhat dangerous rivers of the north it was amusing to see Geoff herding, and breaking the water for his precious pack-pony as if all the treasures of the Golcondas were resting on its back.

However, "old Longlegs," the treasure-bearer, got across all right this time, though I believe he did have to swim a few strokes, and we continued our journey to the north-west for ten miles, and then branched off into high mountains, and eventually towards the south-west, so as to cross the island. The following entry in my diary next day is fairly typical of Icelandic travel—

"*July* 10*th.*—To-day along a great valley to the farmhouse of Silver Stadt, where we found a cow and two sheep grazing on the roof. A black dog sat on the chimney-stack, and resented our advent. About eight in the evening we had to cross a small glacier river going at a considerable speed. The pack-ponies thought they knew the way across better than our guide, and before we could stop them they charged right in and were immediately

swept off their legs. It was not a pleasant sight to see all one's belongings being whisked down the current at seven miles an hour. Geoff said all his plates were irrevocably destroyed, and many of the boxes were entirely submerged. We made all speed down-stream parallel to the swimmers, chiefly anxious because a high bank crowned the other side, and it was impossible to see any landing-place where the ponies could get footing. But it is a very bad place indeed that puts a good Iceland pony in a fix, and first one little animal got footing on a steep place, out of which a man could hardly have climbed, and then another, till the whole lot stood shaking and dripping on the further shore, and we were in a measure comforted. It was some time before we made a crossing, and Thorgrimmer had to hold Mary on to her pony and work very slowly across the torrent, which coursed over our saddles."

The next day we reached the Central Fiskivatn, a big chain of lakes in the middle of Iceland and famed for its excellent trout-fishing. Here we stopped for three days and enjoyed some excellent sport. The first day I caught three dozen trout, averaging nearly a pound each, and on the second we went far afield to a stream where Thorgrimmer said there were fewer trout but bigger fish. In the morning I captured five or six fish ranging from two to three and a half pounds. They were nice lively fellows, and, being in somewhat better condition, fought well. In the afternoon, following the same stream, there was the usual place where a small lake debouched into a river again, and full of good trout. I fished away steadily for an hour

A DAY'S SPORT AT FISKIVATN
*The largest Trout weighed* 10 *lbs.*

and caught two dozen fish from half a pound to a pound each. Geoff was off in another arm of the same stream, so I hailed him to come home, meanwhile flogging away at the now played-out pool. Whilst doing this I suddenly saw the large back fin of a fish boil up a little further down-stream, so I immediately ran a few steps and threw over the rise. He came up at once, and I knew by the way he bored that this was something bigger than usual.

The river at this point was narrow, only some ten yards across; so, although I only had the trout on a small-sized Loch Leven "Heckem peckem," I expected to manage him with care whatever size he might be. He kept moving from side to side and making small rushes, which was exactly what I wanted, as that would tire him; but this was no ordinary fish willing to give in after a dingdong worry. He knew something, and in those preliminary rushes had thought it all out. The stream was too narrow, he could not get anywhere, but if he made the lake, some twenty yards above, he would have a clear run and break me. Slowly at first he began to move up-stream, then, increasing the pace, it was a race who should reach first the stony shallow at the lake mouth—he or I. The biped had the best of it. Filling my pockets with stones and bombarding the shallows was the only way to keep the fish from his point, and what with playing him and picking up stones, which were by no means plentiful, I had warm work for a minute or two. By and by the stones gave out, and with a great rush the fish got by and dashed to the lake. I had about eighty yards of line on my Malloch

reel—a present from the inventor some years before—and the fish took out quite forty in his big rush. I was afraid it was all up and that he never was going to stop, but the previous strain was beginning to tell on him, and even with my light tackle I felt at length that I had the mastery. I have been a trout fisher "a' me days," as they say in the north, but I never have seen a trout fight better or had grander sport with a fish than with this big fellow. For some twenty minutes he bored and rushed, jumped, jigged his head and resorted to every device without once sulking, and then at last showed side for the first time and began the rolls of a spent fish. Geoff and Thorgrimmer now came up and witnessed the last struggles of the gallant fellow, but I would not allow either of them to touch him, but worked him into the shallows at my feet and threw him on the bank. When we eventually got back to camp with the prize he was found to turn the scale at ten pounds, the largest trout I have ever caught with the fly.

During our stay at Fiskivatn I noticed several pairs of Whooper Swans swimming on the largest of the lakes, and was anxious to secure a male to see if there was any difference in the bill during the winter and the nesting season; but the birds were extremely shy, and during the day kept far out in the middle of the lake quite out of range. As we wended our way home along the lake-side I suddenly noticed two snow-white dots far up on the hill to our right. They were too white for sheep, and the telescope soon revealed the fact that they were a pair of barren swans feeding in a small marsh. The stalk would be a difficult one, as

swans stand high on the ground and are very watchful when on feed. Moreover, the only possible approach was from below and up the bed of a small marsh streamlet, down which there was a good chance of their flying if they were disturbed. Geoff and Thorgrimmer prepared for a protracted wait by the ponies, and I started on a long and careful stalk. The first three hundred yards was easy, as cover could be obtained, but to reach the slight declivity a perfectly barren space of stones must be crossed, and over this I gradually wriggled without being seen. It was cold work to enter the stream, but only by taking advantage of the marsh grasses could my approach be concealed. I was now within three hundred yards of the swans, who were extremely restless, one of the birds keeping watch whilst the other fed; but nearer and nearer I crept whenever both their long necks were crooked for a moment. As I approached the marsh the reeds grew longer and the way became easier, till at last, on taking a peep, I could see the top of the watch bird's head at about one hundred yards' distance. Hardly had I settled down again to move on than a loud flapping and singing noise produced by the grand birds on the wing told me that they were up, and on looking over the reeds I saw to my delight both the swans coming straight towards me. The cock—much the larger bird of the two—sailed over my head at about twenty yards, and I dropped him stone dead with my right barrel. I could easily have killed the hen, as she was a little behind, but I let her go, as she was of no use for scientific examination, and I had already good specimens obtained some years before in the

Orkneys. The male weighed 28 lbs. After skinning the head we had strips off the breast for supper. They tasted much like third-rate beef, tough and stringy, but were a nice change to the perpetual duck and Golden Plover, of which we were now getting a trifle weary. Thus ended a most delightful and exciting day's sport—one of those red-letter days which the hunter can look back upon with real pleasure—the very best combination of stalking, shooting and fishing.

Next day we made the wonderful ice caves of Kalmanstunga. Armed with candles Thorgrimmer led us down a steep rocky declivity into the bowels of the earth, when we suddenly found ourselves on the ice-laid floor of a wonderful chamber several hundred yards long. The floor was of perfectly smooth ice, and on each side our candles lit up wonderful pyramids of ice like huge bridal cakes. The place was bitterly cold, and after wandering about into many side channels where galleries and retreats have been cut out by the prehistoric Icelander as dwelling-places, we were not sorry to again return to the light of day.[1]

I gathered from Thorgrimmer that until the end of the last century sheep robbers had regularly visited the caves of Kalmanstunga, and in one of the top galleries Geoff and I discovered some remains of an old fireplace. With the aid of a sharp stone we disturbed the earth and found many sheep bones and what appeared to be a piece of a human jaw.

[1] These interesting caves were visited in the previous year by Sir Rider Haggard, with Thorgrimmer as his guide. The result of the journey was the novelist's *Eric Brighteyes*, a work replete with charming Icelandic tales and excellent descriptions of the country.

After leaving Kalmanstunga Mary and I wandered many miles off the track, getting lost, and it was not until four in the morning that we discovered the camp.

While at breakfast next morning we saw an interesting sight, of which my brother took a good photograph, namely, a couple of girls packing a herd of sheep into a stone kraal for the purpose of milking them. They squeezed about a wineglassful from each animal, and sold us some excellent butter made from the produce.

Next day we made a big ride of some sixty miles, and in the evening were heading for a lower branch of the Sorg River, where Thorgrimmer said we should get a good day's fishing. He himself was on a track that he had never been before, but Jon said he knew the way, as he had made the cut across country some sixteen years before. But Jon's views on most things, except the absorption of aqua vitæ, were a bit rocky, and on this occasion he distinguished himself by nearly drowning the whole party.

About seven in the evening we came to a formidable obstacle in the shape of a broad lake about a mile and a half across. It looked impossible to cross, as the usual river flowed into it, and Jon said there were quicksands in many places, but that he thought he knew the line all right.

It was rather a strange sensation, wading shoulder deep through the great, still lake. The shore receded far behind us, and still on and on we went, and on looking back it seemed as if we must have been walking on the water, like St. Peter. We had reached the very centre of the lake, and were about

three-quarters of a mile from either shore, when something very unpleasant happened. Geoff was feeling his way on the right, driving six ponies, and I on the left directing the other five pack-animals, when suddenly the ponies in front began floundering about and swimming in all directions. At the same moment my nag seemed to sink under me. Divining the cause, I snatched his head round, and after swimming a few strokes, struck bottom again. We had walked into a quicksand and must either get round it or retreat. At this time my sister, who was behind with Thorgrimmer, became nervous, and, fearing her pony would follow the others, jumped off and stood in water up to her neck. It was disagreeable for a moment, until we all began to laugh and to consider a means of getting round the obstacle.

It was now a question whether it was wiser to retreat or to find a way round the quicksands. Evening had come, and from immersion in the water we were getting cold. After some consultation we decided to make an effort to advance. Geoff took a wide sweep to the right, Jon felt the way slowly to the front, and I, by retreating a hundred yards and coming round, tried the left again. Presently we saw that Geoff was getting along well on hard ground, so we all followed him, and soon had the satisfaction of finding the depth of the water decreasing. In ten minutes we had reached the further shore, and, taking our water-tight boxes from the ponies, changed our wet clothes and continued our journey.

Soon after getting under weigh again I heard a strange, sharp, chattering cry that I had never heard before, and, looking over the marsh-land

from which it proceeded, noticed two long-billed birds, which I immediately recognised as the Black-tailed Godwit. A few of these fine waders breed in the south-east of Iceland, and, being anxious to obtain a pair, I spent more than an hour trying to get within shot. Unlike most waders at their breeding station, they were extremely shy. I could have shot the cock several times, but wished to reserve my first cartridge for the hen, as she was by far the shyer of the two, and if I had shot the male at once she would probably have decamped altogether. By and by she came within about fifty yards, and a shot from my heavily choked gun reached her. She was badly wounded and, sailing away, fell in the marsh a good three hundred yards away. It was an hour before I found her lying dead, and I then returned and without much difficulty secured the cock also.

Thorgrimmer had given me the line of the trail, but after riding for two hours more the pony and I were both tired and hungry. It was only by ascending a hill I saw our two white tents, and was soon enjoying a good dinner and a rest.

The Sorg, a river famous alike for trout and flies, was close by, and next day Thorgrimmer showed me one of the best swims for trout. As we walked up the banks of the fine stream we saw many birds now beginning to gather after breeding, as well as many females with young nestlings. In one swelling of the river were no less than twenty-two Whooper Swans—all old birds evidently not breeding—a big flock of Wigeon drakes, some Scaup and Long-tails, and in the river itself I disturbed a duck with a family of little ones which I am certain

was a female Common Golden-eye, a bird not at this time supposed to visit Iceland. Trout were scarce, rather shy, and not particularly large, but from the excellent feeding they were in grand condition, and fought like lions. I got one of two and a half pounds that raced about like a five-pounder, but by three in the afternoon had only five fish. The sun was now hot and raised a swarm of Sorg flies, certainly bad enough to send Thorgrimmer home, but mere innocents compared with their fellows at Myvatn. Wandering on up the stream, I at length reached a deep, still pool at the bottom of a series of rapids. It was fifteen or twenty feet deep, almost as clear as crystal, and sailing about in its liquid depths were eighteen or twenty splendid char. As usual they absolutely refused to look at a fly. Then I tried them with pretty nearly every lure in the fishing-basket, but nothing seemed to be of the smallest attraction. It was hard to be defeated, and, sitting on the bank, I watched a splendid pair of White-tailed Eagles soaring above the river a few hundred yards away. An apologetic cough was now heard from the top of the bank, and a small and shaggy Icelander made his appearance and surveyed my fishing paraphernalia with a look of supercilious wonder. In mock pantomime I begged his assistance by pointing to the big char and the useless trumpery of the fishing-tackle maker, shaking my head sadly. He understood in a moment, and began to feverishly overturn huge rocks and sods of earth. Of course; what an idiot I was! Why had I not thought of the seductive worm of boyhood's days? In less than a minute down into those limpid depths sank

a wriggling lob on a Stewart tackle, and no sooner tried than five big fish dashed at the bait. It was not high-class sport, but very good fun while it lasted. I simply cleaned out that pool in about two hours. Each char took from five to ten minutes, and they were all about the same size, from three to four and a half pounds, beautiful golden-bellied fellows, and game as far as they knew how. A char does not act so gallantly as a trout. He certainly makes one fine rush, but then it is all over, just tug, tug, tug, like a blessed old perch or tench, till you have him dead beat.

Meanwhile the Icelander sat on the bank, all beams and smiles—rather commercial smiles I found they were presently, when he appeared with a pony and a large sack and said they belonged to him, and he was ready to remove the spoil. To this I was quite agreeable on the condition that he would take the fish to our camp, three miles down the river, where my brother would take a photograph of them, as it would be nice to have a good picture of such a beautiful basket of fine char. He at once promised to do this, and started off along the river-bank in the direction of our temporary abode. However, this was only a bluff, for he never went near our camp, but rode straight on to Reykavick, about forty miles away, and sold his load at a fish store for twenty-five kroners.

Whilst fishing for the char I witnessed a most interesting sight in the way of bird life. A large snow-white bird came over the hills and commenced beating up and down the river some half a mile below. By and by it ascended the river and began fishing over the stream within a short

distance, and I at once saw that it was an old Snowy Owl. Owls are not generally supposed to catch fish as a part of their diet, and it was certainly most unusual to see this great snow-white bird beating up and down the river in broad sunlight. The flight of this owl resembled that of the short-eared species which we may often see hawking by day in our islands, and he kept moving backwards and forwards for five or six minutes, until he spied a char near the surface and descended upon it with high-uplifted wings. Unlike the great clumsy Sea-Eagle, he captured his prey without a splash or fuss. He simply fell to the water, and, hardly wetting his toes, picked the fish neatly out of its natural element and sailed away to the mountains to enjoy his dinner.

After a day spent at Thingvella and its charming lakes we finally set out for Reykavick, which we reached after a most delightful ride totalling five hundred miles. Iceland had not presented the obstacles we had been led to anticipate would be encountered in its wilder parts; indeed, beyond the difficulty of crossing glacier rivers, there is no reason why ladies should not accompany their husbands and brothers as they do in Norway. Iceland is now one of the few European countries where the traveller can wander at will with his tent, and live with a small additional cost on the produce of his gun and rod amongst charming and good-natured people. The trail of the serpent made by the tourist's dollar has not yet contaminated the peasantry as it has done in Norway, and there is yet room for a few sportsmen in their northern wilds.

We found a Danish ship about to leave for the Faroes and Scotland, and after a pleasant voyage of three days reached the former islands without incident.

Few people in this country have visited the Faroes, although they are now within thirty-six hours' sail of England, and there is some good trout-fishing to be had there. The coast scenery as we entered one of the numerous ports from the east was fine, beetling crags and precipitous hills, green and flat on the top like a series of small table mountains. A terrace formation, too, is seen on most of the hills. On these the sheep and ponies graze and the little farmhouses are perched. The land is much richer than that of either Iceland or the Shetlands, and, owing to the vicinity of the Gulf Stream, the climate throughout the year is warm and equable. Like all dwellers in isolated islands, the Faroese lead a lonely existence, seldom seeing a strange face, and making but few visits to the capital, Thorshavn, and then only to sell their sheep and ponies or exchange them for other necessaries. Sometimes the monotony of their lives is broken by a whale hunt on a large scale—that is, when a very large school of Bottlenose Whales has been headed outside and gently urged up over the long Voes. I was told by Herr Muller, the Sysselmund of Thorshavn and judge-in-chief of all the whale hunts, that the Faroese have a very perfect system of smoke signalling, and that men are told off on various headlands at the mouth of the Voes to signal the advent of whales. By lighting fires and causing the smoke to arise in various manners the look-out can signal forty miles away

to Thorshavn the possibilities of a capture, the state of the sea, the number of whales and boats required for the chase. When a really big school is sighted the excitement in Thorshavn and the surrounding district is intense, and all make a great rush for the boats, men, women, and even children joining in the strife for first place. A big whale hunt is the great event of the year, and when, after hours of skilful manœuvring, the scared Cetaceans are finally driven on to the beach, the whole population goes mad with the lust of slaughter. Men and women, even quite young girls, often spring from the boats, and, standing in the water, lance the maddened whales with their harpoons and killing-knives. Accidents rarely happen, though occasionally a whale in its death throes rolls over a man or strikes him with its tail. On the whole the whale hunt is looked upon with delight by the inhabitants and is source of little danger.

Herr Muller, who was an old correspondent of mine and an excellent ornithologist, told me that the real difficulty of these whale hunts was in afterwards settling the claims of the respective parties engaged in the fray. Even little children got their share if they owned a paddle or a rullock in one of the boats, and so the good Postmaster-General and final arbiter on the bodies of defunct Cetaceans had no easy task to perform during the autumn months. That he did his duty well was evidenced by the universal respect in which he was held. I was very anxious to stay and take part in one of these hunts, but we were told that months might elapse before another school appeared

in a favourable spot, and my leave was up in another fortnight.

It was a beautifully still afternoon as we steamed up to Thorshavn, a little village of wooden houses nestling among the rocks at the foot of the high, green-terraced hills. The place seems very green and homely after barren Iceland, and there was that indescribable charm about the island that appertains to the Orkneys and the Shetlands—the charm that comes of the ever-changing play of shadow and sunshine on land and sea in a bracing and brilliant atmosphere. The harbour was alive with boats of the usual slender Norse type—high of prow and light of oar—and the natives rowed their craft with all the dash and go of men born to the water, whilst chanting their wild and not unmusical sagas. Taken as a whole, the Faroese men and women are of the usual Scandinavian type—yellow hair, blue eyes, pointed features, and high cheekbones. Not a particularly fine race, like the northern Norwegians, but amongst them were a few exceptionally handsome men. Some of the young men of Faroe were certainly as dark as Spaniards, the nation to whom they doubtless owed their features, for it is well known that two ships of the ill-fated Armada struck these northern isles, and that some of the crews escaped and doubtless settled amongst the natives. The Beau Brummel of the place was a fine fellow about six feet three inches in height, and dressed in the national costume he made an excellent model for Geoff and his camera.

There seems to be no history of the origin of the national costume, which is at once picturesque

and useful. The most curious part of it is the shark-skin covering. A single piece of skin is wrapped closely round the foot and gathered in at the top, giving a puckered-up appearance, and is fastened round the ankles by a bright-coloured woollen cord. Many of the men carry the long whale-killing knife called *Grinda knivur*.

The town of Thorshavn was like any other Scandinavian seaside village—groups of bare wooden sheds, with white-painted windows and green turf roofs, and on all the rocks and open beaches masses of halibut, cod, ling, pollock, haddock and saithe put out to dry for shipment to Spain and the West Indies.

There are no streets in Thorshavn, but you stumble along winding alleys paved in places with an outcrop of natural rock or a few stones flung into the worst holes. The absence of roads in Faroe is explained by the fact that there are no wheeled vehicles in the islands. Everything is carried on pony-back. Articles are packed in long narrow crates resting on bundles of hay and a sheepskin. These ponies are generally led and rarely ridden as in Shetland. The horse of the islands is slightly larger than the Iceland pony, and is said to possess neither that wonderful nag's endurance nor his surefootedness. In some of the most isolated farmhouses, where ponies cannot travel, it is the custom when a man dies to lash his corpse to a plank of wood, which is then carried on a man's back to the nearest cemetery.

Under the able guidance of the English Consul, Mr. Jacobsen, we saw the Governor's house, the pride of Faroe, then the great tree of the island

(a more sickly-looking specimen than the Akureyri wonder), then the curious little Parliament house, where the members get 2*s.* 3*d.* per day per man during the session, and last, but not least, a wonderful wall made entirely from the skulls of captured whales.

In the evening we went to a grand ball given in the only two-storeyed building in the place. We all enjoyed the ball very much—so unlike anything else of its kind in Europe.

After a great deal of forcing and squeezing, rather like a Rugby scrum, we reached the top of the room, where the "quality" of the island were seated in majestic isolation. It reminded one of the old county ball at home, with the self-selected standing ground of local magnates.

The national dance of Faroe was in full swing. Ye Gods! this was a dance and no mistake. It lasted for twelve hours, without a halt for breath or refreshments in some cases. It was a sort of grand country dance, accompanied by singing, which rose and fell like the wind on a spring day. I believe there was a single fiddler who started the music, but he soon relinquished his efforts as hopeless in the babel of song and conversation. There was no pairing off, every one, from old people to mere children, took hands and joined in the national dance. All kept up a snaky, circling movement, winding in and out like a lowland stream, and chanting the while, with a curiously rhythmic cadence, the songs of old and the sagas of the Northlands. There was something very charming and old-fashioned about it all, and we were much struck by the serious earnestness of some of the

women. Two of them, notably leaders of the movement, burst forth in passionate vehemence, and, goaded on by the other women, their voices rose to heights of eloquence and excitement, and anon died away to melancholy croonings. Each dancer held his neighbour by the hand or arm, and there seemed to be some sort of etiquette that the long chain of human links must not be broken. The steps were a sort of polka shuffle, with a constant change of time according to the subject that was being sung. Sometimes the chain moved slowly like a funeral march, then it would become faster and break into a mad gallop, the younger men leaping into the air and stamping and yelling. Then it would subside to a slow walk, and again rise to a passionate outburst. The excitement was catching, so when the Consul said that the people would take it as a compliment if we would join in, there was no need of a second invitation. We each burst forcibly in between two dancers, and Geoff said I had no business to wait till the prettiest girl in the room came to the surface. We sang and danced away for about an hour. My sister, who was held firmly in the chain by two robust youths, had no little difficulty in escaping. She succeeded, however, at last by making a wild spring in the direction of the door and upsetting several of the onlookers. Geoff and I hung on for a bit, until the dust and the heat of the room became unbearable, and then we, too, fled out into the night. The dance, I was told, commenced at 6 p.m., and the chain of human beings never stopped moving until six the next morning. Certainly if those we saw continued throughout the

A FAROE ISLANDER IN NATIONAL COSTUME

night it was a very fine physical effort and the Faroese are in no danger of extinction.

It is only at a dance of this description and importance that the native gala costume is worn, and many of the guests were to us gracefully adorned. A mere man is not supposed to know anything about such things, so for a description I have fallen back on the words of a recent writer on the Faroes, Mrs. L. von Thiele—

"The girls wear a full, dark-stuff skirt, reaching to the ankles, a black velvet bodice, laced across the front over a white chemisette, turned in at the neck, with short, plain sleeves coming half-way between the shoulder and elbow, a little silk Paisley shawl over the shoulders, and a gaily-striped apron. The hair is drawn plainly off the face, braided into several plaits, and turned up under a little black silk or velvet Dutch cap, tied under the chin. The men wear fine black-cloth knee-breeches, fastened with gold buttons, a cut-away coat, and knitted stockings, with low shoes, the whole having a curious resemblance to an English gentleman's Court costume. By their side they carry a very ornate whaling-knife, more for ornament than use, for the ones actually used in whale hunts are larger and stronger."

In two days more we were back again in dear old Scotland after a most delightful trip.

## CHAPTER V

### ALL SORTS AND CONDITIONS OF MEN

My father was a man with a broad love of humanity, choosing as his friends those whose outlook was great in viewing life generally. Pettiness in any one he particularly disliked, and taking a kindly interest in people and things himself, he expected the same from others. He had an abiding aversion to " shop " of all kinds, and I do not suppose there was a house in Britain where a stranger would have heard less talk of art than in our home. He liked to gather round him men of varied interests, so that those who came met others on whom to exercise their brilliance in mental sword-play, and we, looking on, felt life was both merry and intellectual.

On Sunday afternoons, Sullivan, Arthur Cecil, Liza Lehman and all the great musicians of the day would come in, and gave us delightful concerts in the old studio at Cromwell Place. My father was devoted to music, of which three of my sisters, Effie, Mary and Carrie, were excellent exponents, and every morning as he painted, one or other of his daughters would play to him all the more serious or lighter operas which were popular at the time.

Gladstone used to come to lunch when he was sitting for his portraits, of which my father painted three. He was a pleasant visitor, and liked to discuss all kinds of subjects, giving us a lecture in the Early Victorian style upon all sorts of things,

whether he knew much about them or not. He would orate upon art, music, poetry, and religion, of which he knew a great deal, and even on Natural History, about which he knew nothing, but he was always charming to everybody—and especially to children—and I have several letters from him which show the trouble this great man, whose life was then oppressed with all the cares of a Prime Minister, took to discuss with an insignificant boy like myself the relations of birds and their influence on human character.

Speaking of Natural History, we should expect that our best poets, being embued with a love of all that was beautiful and interesting in the great out-of-doors, would display some slight knowledge of the subject, but my experience is, that there is no class of writers—with the exception of modern novelists and pressmen—who are so woefully ignorant of what goes on around them in the country as our poets. Tennyson is not so bad, as he never ventures beyond a description of common things associated with his early Lincolnshire home. George Meredith knew a little about plants, and Keats had probably heard a nightingale. "I do love bullfinches," said Matthew Arnold one day at Murthly, as we stopped to admire two chaffinches that settled on the roadway in front of us. Now Matthew Arnold was an Oxford man and a scholar, but he did not know the commonest birds, plants or trees, and with all his learning he missed the best in life. The only poet whose work ranges over a vast variety of subjects, and who makes few mistakes in the ways of birds and beasts, is Rudyard Kipling, who, being a mental giant, like Roosevelt,

can not only read and retain the knowledge gathered by others, but *visualise* the actions of Nature in all its aspects. Nothing finer has ever been written than "The Three Sealers" (The Seven Seas), or some[1] of the animal studies in the *Jungle Book*, such as "The White Seal," and yet Kipling has never been in Alaska. I believe he got the whole of his material for these subjects by talking to one man who had lived on St. Paul (the fur seal island), and a careful study of Elliot's *Fur Seals of Alaska*. One day I called his attention to an error occurring in the verses beginning, "In the Neolithic Age," in which he says: "When the reindeer roared as Paris roars to-night." Now the reindeer does not roar during the rutting seasons, but emits a series of low grunts which are neither dignified nor awe-inspiring, as is the voice of the Red Deer stag, so I ventured to suggest that the poet should substitute the latter animal for the former, to which I received the following reply—

"*Bateman's*,
"*Burwash*,
"*Sussex*.

"DEAR MR. MILLAIS,

"I'm just back after three months abroad, to find your letter of the 28th of November. It

[1] The word "some" is meant to express that, whilst as literature his studies of tigers, elephants, wolves, etc., are excellent, there runs through their expressed thoughts ideas that are purely human, and not animal. Many of his wild beasts' conversations are distinctly as grotesque as they are imaginary, for animals do not judge things from the human standpoint, and the more we study them the more do we find that to do so is to take an altogether incorrect view of mammalian life. In such cases the remark of the veteran, John Burroughes, who abhorred all Nature-fakers, is about the best, "Why can't they let a straddlebug *be* a straddlebug?"

was awfully good of you to take the trouble, and you've put me under an obligation. The change to 'Red Deer' will be made for a new edition that's coming out soon and for other editions as requisite.

"It's rather a coincidence that in the first and last verse of those verses I should have made errors which had to be corrected. I put (originally) the two- or three-toed horse in the Neolithic Age, and was very justly hauled over the coals for so doing. I have your big vols. of the *Mammals of Great Britain*, and I don't think that you anywhere state that the common hedgehog is extraordinarily proof against poisons—toxic for choice. He does not mind diphtheria or tetanus germs, and can also absorb mineral poisons in large quantities. A learned professor told me so this year. Is it true?[1]

"Very gratefully yours,
"RUDYARD KIPLING."

A man I knew well for a short time was Theodore Roosevelt, late President of the North American Republic, and it was a great disappointment to me that his untimely death prevented a visit I had hoped to pay him in 1919.

Nearly all ages and nations produce men of exceptional physical and mental capacity that tower above their fellows. From youth upwards they exhibit a strong disposition to lead others, and allow none of those obstacles that deter lesser creatures to obstruct the path of ambition and success. Theodore Roosevelt was one of these "super-men," and though born with advantages superior to the

[1] It is very doubtful if hedgehogs are immune, as suggested. They are easily poisoned by strychnine.

common lot, there was always the irresistible verve about him that carries others on and arrests attention. Even when reading his first writings in the *Century* Magazine, where he describes how he captured two desperadoes in the heart of the Rockies, and took them unaided in the depth of winter over hundreds of miles of desolate prairies to the nearest settlement, where they could be tried and convicted, he exhibited the fact that he was not only a man of exceptional courage and resource, but also one out to do his duty to his country. His rural life on the Little Missouri taught him many things, and, above all, made him a lover of the great out-of-doors, with its birds, beasts and virile men. Yet in all his life he always placed his sports and private tastes in a category subservient to the one aim and object of his life, which was to lead the people to better and higher things, to form the national policy of his country and to clean Government and private concerns of those undesirable elements which clog the wheels of all progress. That was why he attacked the meat-packers of Chicago and the rotten police system of New York; and if his detractors accused him of only stirring up the mud without cleansing the stables of Augeus, they forgot the honesty of purpose and the difficulty of achieving successful results in a land, at any rate at that time, seething with dirt and venal corruption.

From his childhood he told me he always loved birds and animals. By the time he was sixteen he knew all the birds of his early home, and had studied the principal works of American ornithology. When he was eighteen he went to Egypt and made a small collection of Nile valley birds, which I think

he afterwards presented to some museum. After this he does not seem to have indulged in further collecting, beyond superintending the work of his naturalists in the course of his big expedition to Africa.

As a matter of fact, his knowledge of American and African birds was very considerable, for he was so thorough in all he did, that when undertaking any new project, his method was to thoroughly study the literature of the subject, and this, combined with his marvellous memory, enabled him to begin his work better equipped than most men.

We have heard much of Roosevelt the talker and Roosevelt the politician, teaching all and sundry their business with equal confidence, but I think his greatest asset was hard work and a superb memory. He took trouble to make himself agreeable and well-informed, and seemed to know as much about other people's tastes and family history as they did themselves. I remember the first time I met him, at a luncheon party at Lord Lonsdale's in 1908. He spoke in turn to nearly every man there, and was cognisant of all their past history and activities, because I feel sure he had read it all beforehand. I suppose I was the only man he had not addressed, and just as all were leaving he came up to me and said, "I seem to know your face. Who are you?" "Millais is my name," I replied. "What! *Breath from the Veldt* Millais?" he said enthusiastically. "You've just got to sit down right here and have a chat. I don't know when I have been so pleased to meet any one." [1]

[1] Next morning he wrote me a charming letter: "You were one of the men I came to England to see, and I should have been so distressed had I missed you yesterday."

That was just the nice way he had of being agreeable, and if we did not have a chat, I listened at any rate for some twenty minutes with absorbed interest to his views of Nature and the zoology of South Africa, of which he displayed, contrary to my expectations, a very considerable knowledge. He described Bustards, Plovers, Raptorials, Cranes, Francolins, etc., in a way that quite astonished me, although I knew he could not have seen them, and when I made some comment, he said he had read every work on the birds and mammals of Africa he could obtain at the library at Washington before starting on his journey. It is one thing to read books, especially on birds, and quite another thing to remember all their contents, but I must confess that on this and subsequent occasions on which I had the pleasure of talking " birds " to Roosevelt, the power of his memory filled me with admiration.

His views on modern nomenclature were somewhat surprising and not always consistent. At first he seemed to be inclined to favour the inclusion as subspecies of all local forms. This is borne out by his acceptance, and even approval, of the naming of the collections of the Roosevelt expedition, which included many new birds and mammals as subspecies which even the most enthusiastic advocates of local forms could scarcely accept. On the other hand, after due consideration and some time had elapsed, he became a very orthodox " lumper," and laughed at the claims of the " splitters." The case in point which caused his conversion to the former group was, he told me, an occasion when he submitted the skulls of three *Bos caffer* which his party had shot out of one herd at one place in East

Africa to Professor Matschie of Berlin. The learned zoologist in question pronounced them as the skulls of three different subspecies, giving each and all separate names.

More recently Roosevelt himself expressed his views on scientific nomenclature: "The time has passed when we can afford to accept as satisfactory a science of animal life whose professors are either mere roaming field collectors or mere closet catalogue-writers who examine and record minute differences in 'specimens' precisely as philatelists examine and record minute differences in postage stamps—and with about the same breadth of view and power of insight into the essential. Little is to be gained by that kind of 'intensive' collecting and cataloguing which bears fruit only in innumerable little pamphlets describing with meticulous care unimportant new subspecies, or new species hardly to be distinguished from those already long known. Such pamphlets have almost no real interest, except for the infrequent rival specialists who read them with quarrelsome interest."—Introduction to *Tropical Wild Life in British Guiana*, by William Beebe (1917).

Although it must be acknowledged that Roosevelt's favourites amongst wild creatures were the larger mammals, and especially the dangerous ones, which afforded opportunities in the excitement of the chase of thrilling moments, his delight in the birds of Africa and America always displayed the feelings of the true naturalist, whose chief instinct is not to slay, but to sit down and study the ways of wild creatures in their natural homes. In spite of his abundant energy, the President had also a

reflective side to his character, and a very real appreciation of all that is best in art and Nature. He loathed what was false and untrue to life as sincerely as a man like Selous. As an instance of this, his excellent papers on the falsity of protective coloration are a good example, and did much to controvert the crystallised opinions of theoretical men of science, who for the most part had no knowledge of the action of Nature on the spot.

On occasion, Roosevelt was inclined to be dogmatic and, as I have remarked, somewhat inconsistent. I remember once, after he returned from his African trip and his excellent book (*African Game-trails*) had been published, he gave me a lecture of about twenty minutes (with scarcely a pause to take breath) on the superiority of pictures done on the spot by a zoological artist over all forms of instantaneous photography. At last, when I managed to get a word in, it was impossible to refrain from saying, "If these are your opinions, why did you not take an artist with you instead of a photographer?" "Well, you have got me there," he admitted, laughing. "I could not have found the right man, and if I had it is doubtful if he would have come." "What was the matter with Carl Rungius?[1] Did you ask him?" I suggested. There was no answer to this, for had Roosevelt taken Rungius to Africa with him we should have had a magnificent pictorial record of the larger mammals of Africa which would have made his book one of permanent interest, and then we should have been spared that dreadful series of bad portraits of the author standing in fatuous attitudes

[1] Carl Rungius, the best artist of mammals in North America.

over mangled corpses of deceased hartebeests, lions, and zebras.

Roosevelt probably knew this himself, but his book was written for the man in the street, and so he perhaps felt that those horrible portraits were expected of him, but it only reminds us of Corney Grain's

> " Choir-boy whose voice o'er-topped the rest—
> Though very inartistic, the public like it best."

Theodore Roosevelt was certainly one of the most remarkable men of this or any other time. In person he was the embodiment of physical fitness, being an expert rider and shot and skilled in most games. Mentally he was a giant whose broad vision ranged over a vast variety of subjects. At one sitting I have heard him discuss big game hunting, bimetallism, zoology, geography, national policy, European history, botany, palæontology, archæology, and ancient forms of religion, bringing to each and all a thoroughness, accuracy, wealth of detail and breadth of criticism that was astonishing did we not know the extent of his reading and the power of his memory. His active brain was a complete bibliography of a thousand subjects, and at a moment's notice he could give you chapter and verse to which to refer in regard to any point at issue. No man living could have produced two such diverse volumes as *Presidential Addresses and State Papers* and *Through the Brazilian Wilderness*, and if we add to this his experience as a soldier, and exposition of his New Bible, we can obtain some slight grasp of his mental and physical activities.[1]

[1] " The man's memory was prodigious. I once spent some ten days—on two separate visits—as his guest at the White

Amongst the successes of his life may be mentioned the impetus he gave to the research for the elimination of yellow fever in the canal zone, and what to naturalists was a work of great importance, was his continuous advocacy of the preservation of the fauna and flora of the North American continent. In this he certainly achieved a great measure of success, although in many instances we fear his efforts came too late.

Personally he was a man of charming disposition, full of thought for others, ever alive to better the lot of the unfortunate, and possessed of that kindly sympathy which we always associate with really great men. His attitude to us during the Great War was that of intense sympathy and understanding, and in him England has lost her best advocate for future policy, as well as her best friend amongst the statesmen of the world.

In the spring of 1917, I heard from Roosevelt that he intended raising a Volunteer Corps in the United States for service in France, and after obtaining permission from the Admiralty, I offered

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House in 1908. At one luncheon party the question of Mayne Reid's novels came up. Roosevelt gave a *précis* of the more remarkable of their plots, of their characters, their defects and strong points. So he could with Dickens, Thackeray, Jane Austen, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Mark Twain. When I was setting out to study the negro in the New World he gave me from memory an almost complete bibliography of the works discussing the slavery question in the United States, from the books of Anthony Benezet in 1762 to those of Olmsted in 1861. Once, when the then Provost of Oriel called and lunched, and was rather perversely Hellenistic in his lore, Roosevelt, with a twinkle in his eye, turned the subject to the Tartar invasion of Eastern Europe in the thirteenth century, and gave us a really remarkable sketch of its chief incidents and ultimate results."—Sir H. H. Johnston, *Nature*, January 16th, 1919.

my services to him, which he was good enough to accept. The progress of this movement was taken up with enthusiasm by all his old comrades, but when America saw that she would have to introduce compulsory service to raise a sufficient army, a veto was placed upon all Volunteers. With regret at the collapse of his scheme Roosevelt thus writes:—

"*788 Fifth Avenue,*
"*New York,*
"*June 22nd,* 1917.

"MY DEAR MILLAIS,

"You have doubtless seen the President's announcement wherein he refused to make use of the Volunteer Forces which Congress had authorised him to permit me to raise.

"Prior to this announcement by the President, I had sent him a telegram as follows—

> "'I respectfully ask permission immediately to raise two divisions for immediate service at the front under the bill which has just become law, and hold myself ready to raise four divisions if you so direct. I respectfully refer for details to my last letters to the Secretary of War. If granted permission, I earnestly ask that Captain Frank McCoy be directed to report to me at once. Minister Fletcher has written me that he is willing. Also, if permission to raise the divisions is granted, I would like to come to Washington as soon as the War Department is willing, so that I may find what supplies are available, and at once direct the regular officers who are chosen for brigade and regimental commands how and where to get to work.'

"To this the President answered as follows—

"'I very much regret that I cannot comply with the request in your telegram of yesterday. The reasons I have stated in a public statement made this morning, and I need not assure you that my conclusions were based entirely upon imperative considerations of public policy and not upon personal or private choice.'

"Accordingly, I communicated with as many of the men who had agreed to raise units for service in this division as possible, and after consulting with about twenty of them I issued a statement which was made public through the Press.

"'I now release you and all your men. I wish to express my deep sense of obligation to you and to all those who had volunteered under, and in connection with this division.

"'As you doubtless know, I am very proud of the Rough Riders, the First Volunteer Cavalry, with whom I served in the Spanish-American War. I believe it is a just and truthful statement of the facts when I say that this regiment did as well as any of the admirable regular regiments with which it served in the Santiago campaign. It was raised, armed, equipped, drilled, mounted, dismounted, kept two weeks aboard transports, and put through two victorious fights, in which it lost one-third of the officers and one-fifth of the men—all within sixty days from the time I received my commission.

"'If the President had permitted me to raise

the four divisions, I am certain that they would have equalled this record, only on a hundredfold larger scale. They would have all been in the firing-line before, or shortly after, the draft army had begun to assemble; and, moreover, they could have been indefinitely reinforced, so that they would have grown continually stronger and more efficient.

"'I regret from the standpoint of the country that your services were not utilised. But the country has every reason to be proud of the zeal, patriotism and business-like efficiency with which you came forward.'

"With all good wishes,
"Faithfully yours,
"THEODORE ROOSEVELT."

The following letter, too, is somewhat interesting from the fact that it shows how inconsistent President Wilson's attitude was, when suggesting self-determination for all local races, when he himself, as representative of the American nation, was occupying Hayti without "the smallest regard to the wishes of the Haytians."

"*Metropolitan,*
"*482 Fourth Avenue, New York,*
*January 28rd,* 1918.

"MY DEAR COMMANDER MILLAIS,

"Is the enclosed all right? The irritating thing is, that I am sure I have several of Selous' letters; but they are in the enormous mass of my papers in the Congressional Library, and it would literally take months of effort before I could find them.

"I wish my boys could get over to see you, but they don't allow them out of the training trenches for more than a day or two at a time, and then very infrequently. Just at present I am devoting every ounce of energy I have to the effort to hurry up our action. If I ever meet you again I will tell you some of the difficulties I have met with from your own people, who have unwittingly contributed to keep our administration fatuously complacent and inactive.

"I grinned over Lloyd-George's proposal to consult the natives about the government of the African possessions. Our President gladly followed suit, for it is the kind of preposterous fatuity that appeals to him—appeals to him as a matter of oratory only, for in practice at this time he is occupying Hayti, without the smallest regard to the wishes of the Haytians. There never was a more ludicrous proposal than that of consulting those wild savages as to whom they love best. It would literally be quite as rational to get from them an expression of opinion as to the nebular hypothesis.

"Faithfully yours,

"THEODORE ROOSEVELT."

In the lives of all men who have knocked about the world as I have done, there must sometimes occur circumstances which in our present state of knowledge of the unseen world are both strange and often unaccountable. Amongst the hundreds of times in which I have sat at dinner with the unlucky number thirteen, I have only once seen an objection raised, and on that occasion Matthew Arnold the poet, Edgar Seebohm the playwright,

and Edgar Dawson, an old personal friend, rose together so as to defeat any evil influence. Within six months Matthew Arnold died suddenly of heart disease, Edgar Seebohm was murdered in New York, and within the year Edgar Dawson was drowned in the *Quetta* in Torres Straits on his way home from Australia. We should have taken little notice of the slight sensation caused by the alarm of a certain lady at the dinner in question, which occurred at Birnam Hall, but for the fact that she was so much upset by the prospect of some impending calamity, and constantly referred to it afterwards. The last time she had sat down to dinner with thirteen guests the first person to rise had died shortly afterwards, and nothing would induce her to think that a similar catastrophe would not happen. Unfortunately she was right in her surmise. The whole thing may have been pure coincidence, but it was certainly very curious. That it should happen again, and in this case with three apparently healthy men, was all the more extraordinary.

Beyond the undoubted existence of such a thing as "psychic force," which I think is now abundantly proved in the case of such a wonderful exponent as Eusapia Palladino, a woman who can slam shutters and knock over tables at a distance in broad daylight in a room which she has just entered for the first time, the exhibitions of so-called "mediums" are, as a rule, easily explained, or of so trivial a nature as to be devoid of interest, but some of these people who profess to see into the future do make remarkably good guesses, or whatever we like to call them, as to what will occur. In January 1919, I went with my wife to see one of

these gentry, who was said to possess extraordinary powers. He seemed to be a very ignorant man, and after a few moments' silence, he proceeded to talk the most abject rubbish for some ten minutes. As I was dressed in naval uniform (on purpose to mislead him), he talked much of the sea, the war, and certain friends (purely imaginary), so I was quite bored, and made a sign to my wife that it was time to go, when all at once he began to speak of our eldest boy, who was killed in the big advance in 1918, and described him so accurately, both his appearance and characteristics, that I was at once interested.

Of what we may call the supernatural I have had only one experience, and that a most unpleasant one, and as the matter may be of interest to my readers, I will put it down exactly as it happened.[1]

In the year 1906 I resolved to continue my labours in the mapping of the central part of Newfoundland, which at that time was still uncharted owing to the difficulty of reaching the interior. No one seemed to have been in the Mount Sylvester region since Cormack crossed the island in 1827, and the whole district, from the south at Long Harbour to the Gander River in the centre, and the east at Maelpeg to eighty miles to the west of Mount Sylvester, was quite unknown. I was, too, resolved to ascend the Long Harbour River, practically a long series of rapids and overfalls, because Howley, the Government surveyor, and an excellent traveller, had failed to do so, and said it was "impossible."

To accomplish this journey I reached Belloram

[1] I did not refer to this matter in my work *Newfoundland and its Untrodden Ways*, as Ryan was then still alive, and I feared it might hurt his feelings.

in Fortune Bay in September 1906, and was there met by Philip Ryan, who kept the store and telegraph office at the mouth of the Long Harbour and traded with the Micmac Indians.

Philip Ryan was a remarkable man in some ways. He was the soul of geniality, and as active as a cat despite his sixty years. In quite a big sea he would climb up the mast to adjust his sails, and handled his cutter, the *Caribou*, with great skill. Being a thorough Irishman, all his tackle was rotten, and how he had escaped with his life for so long in the squalls of Fortune Bay was difficult to imagine. He was the only man on the south coast the Indians trusted, and it was through him I got my Indian guides for this trip.

After a rough and by no means safe voyage across Fortune Bay, we reached Ryan's house at Long Harbour, where I found one of my Indians. Ryan lived alone in a two-storied wooden house, and the whole place was one indescribable mass of stores, furs, gunpowder, and truck of every description piled in confusion in all the rooms. Everything bespoke dirt and disorder, and the house did not seem to have been swept out for years. About 11 p.m. Ryan conducted me upstairs to a large bedroom and wished me good-night. Immediately I entered the room I felt a deadly chill and sense of unusual depression. Being a man of sanguine temperament, the feeling was unusual, and dispensing with a light I threw off most of my clothes and jumped into a large bed, which seemed to be a litter of clothes (unmade), and covered with what had once been a whitish counterpane.

It was a cold night with frost, and the moon shone

brightly outside. For hours I tossed about uneasily, and whenever I tried to doze I sprang up again with the idea that there was a woman moving about the room. Presently the rays of the moon penetrated to the room (there being no blinds) and fell upon the bed. What now attracted my attention was the peculiar pattern on the counterpane—there were many dark, irregular patches all over it, but the principal design in the centre seemed exactly to fit the outline of my own figure as I lay in bed. The hours crept slowly on, and at last, being unable to sleep, and still half frozen, I arose and got out my reindeer bag, which I placed on the top of the bed and crept in. Even then sleep refused to come, and the mysterious sounds of some one moving close to the bed continued. I often tried closing my eyes, and then, after gauging the direction of what seemed like rustling skirts, I opened them suddenly. There was nothing there.

So the night passed, and at about six I arose, resolved to get out of that horrible room. No one was stirring, so I started to get my kit in order and remove it downstairs. The morning sun streamed in, and as I lifted the reindeer bag from the bed I saw plainly the central design on the counterpane. *It was the perfect outline of a woman in black, whilst the stains around were blood red.*

I can only say that I fled downstairs three steps at a time, and out into the sunlight. An hour later Steve Bernard, my Indian, fetched my kit from the room, and after a hurried breakfast, at which Ryan was as jolly and cheery as ever, we started on our journey up the river.

Two nights afterwards, whilst sitting over the

camp fire, I told Steve and the other Indians my experience in the bedroom, and asked them if they could give any clue to the mystery. Their faces showed strange emotion and horror, and at first there was a long silence, in which no one spoke. "Why! did you not know?" began Steve at last. "I tell you. Two years ago Ryan's wife came to the house at Long Harbour. At first she seemed all right and was kind to us Indians. By and by she seemed queer, and often said, when we passed and brought furs, that the quiet would kill her. She'd sit for hours on the porch looking out to sea and saying nothing when you spoke to her. One day las' winter I come in from Shoe Hill with my furs, an' Ryan ask me to stay a day or two and help clean up, so I did. Next morning I go to the boat to get some things, when I see Mrs. Ryan come out on the porch and look about. I go towards her, when she pulled out a box of matches and lit one. Then she walk along the front and throw the match into a barrel of gunpowder standing there. There was a great blow-up, and I ran and raised her up, an' she was 'most dead. Ryan was standing on top of stairs when the barrel went off, and was blown to the bottom, but not much hurt. Together we picked the woman up and carried her to the upstairs room. There she soon died, *and no one has been in that room since.*"

Philip Ryan continued to live in his lonely house at the mouth of the Long Harbour, where in after years he entertained three of my hunting friends, St. George Littledale, Captain Lumsden and Captain the Hon. Gerald Legge, whom I sent to him, and for whom he procured Indians. He went to Belloram

again and again in spite of squalls and bad tackle, till one night in 1916 the old *Caribou* capsized in a heavy squall off Belloram "Back Cove," and Philip Ryan was never seen again. The tragedy was observed from Belloram, and old Doctor Fitzgerald at once got out his boat, the *Albatross*, and with three volunteers, Isaac Burke, George and Alec Tibbs, went to the rescue. They were, however, too late, and themselves met with disaster by collision with a small steamer, the *Hump*, which they met in the dark. The two Tibbs and the gallant doctor escaped by a miracle, but Isaac Burke was swept overboard and drowned.

What strange memories are recalled when we dive into the drawers full of letters from correspondents in all parts of the world! I was turning over one of these to-day, and find that the first three letters alone contain little incidents that give something of the romantic lives of other people in far-off places. Here is the first. It is from a Micmac Indian, Joe Teddore, in Newfoundland, and evidently written by Ryan—

"*November* 1909.

"I was very glad, and so was all the other Indians, to hear you got over that sickness (in Alaska) and got lots of bares. I think those big ones would scare me. Some American fellers has been reading your book, and got me to go in las' fall and see the woods in your country about Hungry Grove Pond and Shoe Hill Ridge. The Boss say to me, 'Now, Joe, you give good report of the timber, and me give you good present,' but me say, 'No use tell him good

woods in there, for he come to-morrow or next year and see.' So I tell him true, and he look sour. I seen no big heads like you kill on Gander and Shoe Hill."

I think that the above shows that the rough untutored savage has often a much cleaner sense of honesty than the company promoter.

The next letter is a very curious one from a Russian girl, and the reader must judge for himself how much of it is genuine *insouciance* and how much commercial instinct. Under any circumstances it is an interesting example of human psychology—

"*June 30th, Jagory,*
"*(Hearopor),*
"*Martinishky,*
"*Gouvernement de Kowno,*
"*Russie.*

"DEAR MR. MILLAIS,

"Lettres from unknown people are often not read, trown away, but as mine comes from so far from Russia, perhaps you will read it to the end? I was so struck by the sketches in Pearson's made by you (illustrating an article called a 'Breath from the Veldt'), and spesially by the way in which they were made, that involontarily I began to write to you. There is one sketch which appealled to me spesially, 'Wildebeest cantering out to feed,' you feel the poetry of it—if you are an artist you will understand what I mean by the poetry—the effect of the big thing, the animals and all seen and understood without colours. I like the 'klipbucks

descending a kopje' less, there is not so much movement in them, but the lighting is good, and I love the 'wildebeests at play.' You need not be told they are made from nature. How do you do it? Do you *remember* the poses, or do you draw them by bits, as fast as you can put in a leg or a shoulder or a head? I beg your pardon, but I never liked any sketches in my life as I liked those. I love drawing more than anything else, I think, and next to it—travelling, everything related to travelling, movement, that is why they appealled so to me. I never heard of a life which seemed to me to approach more the ideal than the one you must have lead in Africa—sketching, beauty, breadth, wildness, movement, danger perhaps, all that together. Then I looked at your portrait; somehow the face, as much as the sketches, made me write; and then a man who can draw and loves to draw as you do, is a naturalist, has been in the desert, and is the son of such a man as your father was cant be a bad man. And when I think of it the worst you can do to me is to forget my letter, and as you dont know me, it is not an offence, so why should I not try? Will you bye a wood for 4000 pound (in the gouvernment of Kowno) which is worth much more? We must sell it before the 1*st of August*, that is 18*th new style*, otherwise we will be completely ruined, it is the reason we sell it so cheaply. That is not an appeal to your pity—because if you dont bye it, I daresay somebody else will—but I am a girl so I cant do anything, you can imagine the pleasant position feeling that there is work to be done, that one must 'agir,' that you cant do it because you are a girl and not a man. So when I

saw your face and heard what you had done I thought I should write. I daresay it is 'woman's logic' to connect drawing, a nice face (*sic*) and the bying of the wood, but perhaps you will understand what I mean. The story of the wood is very long, I'll try to make it as short and as easy to understand as I can. We bought an estate 3 years ago through the aid of the bank—that means that the bank pays part of the money for you, and you have to pay per cent to the bank every year. The only real value of the estate was a very big wood, worth 10,000 pounds or about. The estate belonged to jews. As we could not pay the whole money to the jews, they made my mother sign a paper, where it was said that the wood was their's till she paid the remaining 30 thousand roubles, but allowing her at the same time to sell that same wood in part, or all, to pay them back. That sounded very well, but they immediately began to put the wood down and to send away the people we wanted to sell to. Told them the woods was their's and that they never meant to give it back and so on. This spring we got a gendarme to come, from the Emperor's own chancelerie, and he made them sign that they are forced to give the wood back for 3000 pounds, if we get the money before the first of August (old style). There is only a month left and we have not sold it yet, the jews promised to go out of the wood, but they are still there and still send our people out. I dont know the prises, but I know my Mother would sell the *whole* of the wood for 4000; then after giving the jews their 3000 p. we would have 1000 for us and we would be able to pay the per cent to banc for

the estate, otherwise the estate goes. Our's *cannot* pay itself, without the wood, any thing, and as we cannot find 8000 p. to pay the jews, we must try to sell the wood itself at least, and try to get a little bit of money more than that we owe the jew, so as to pay this years percents. It is such a horrid envolved business, though the actual bying of the wood would be simple enough, that I am ashamed to write it to you, but I keep looking at your face, and it gives me courage. I can't go about and look for wood merchants, show them the wood, protect them from the lies of the jews—and do something I must or I will suffocate. But it just struck me, perhaps you dont believe me? I never thought of that; and you have our address and my name, you could come prove it yourself. I may be a bad physiognomiste, but to me it seemed that you would either think it an amusing adventure, or feel it natural that people should appeal to you for sympathy. Perhaps you know somebody who would bye it, perhaps you would help and bye it yourself. I should have liked to have send you photographs of us, but it would not do—if you like I can take some photos of *the* wood for you? If you have a spare moment I should like an answer. I shall not mind a no, because the request was so impossible, but I should like to know if you got my letter and if you read it to the end. The letter is very badly written, but every day is valuable, so I cannot rewrite it, no time, it must go like that.

"M. I.

"To come to us, one must first go to Riga, from there there are 8 hours by the Mitau train, till the

station Behnen, and then 30 verstes with horses till the estate Martinishky." [1]

One of the largest gaps in our knowledge of European birds was the life history of the various ducks which frequent the Palaearctic regions, and to gain a complete understanding of these birds and their plumage I worked for many years, both in amassing a collection of them and obtaining material. Eventually I published two works entitled *The Natural History of the British Surface-feeding Ducks* and *British Diving Ducks*. The success of those books led me to the more ambitious idea of publishing at some future time the monograph of the ducks of the world, but when I came to work out the cost, I found if the volumes were to be reproduced in anything like the scale and quality to which they were entitled, it would have involved a sum of not less than £15,000 or £20,000. That such a work would ever pay was out of the question, but I would gladly have undertaken it if I could have seen my way to reproduce the pictures and letterpress on the lines of former works. This, however, was not possible, and so, much to my regret, the scheme was abandoned. My two most earnest and unselfish co-operators in this venture were Colonel Lord William Percy and Captain the Hon. Gerald Legge. Both of these excellent field naturalists were ready to devote many years to help in obtaining material and information in all parts of the world of which our knowledge was deficient.

[1] One cannot help wondering what has happened to that poor girl and her mother, since Germans and Bolshevists have overrun that part of Russia.

The work was, in fact, begun, and Captain Legge had already made an excellent collection of the skins of African and European ducks, whilst Lord William Percy spent a whole year in North America, besides undertaking a very hazardous journey to N.E. Asia to hunt various ducks, study their habits on the spot and collect skins.

I think that the two following letters from far distant places will give the reader some idea of the difficulties, dangers and unceasing toil and grit required to learn something first-hand of even one genus of birds. Science and the elucidation of truth are hard task-masters and ask their votaries to give all—even life itself—without any monetary reward or the prospect of fame. But, on the other hand, England, and in fact all countries, possess men of the "Selous" stamp, who reckon their private interests as of small account. Such men need no pity, rather the reverse, for they get their reward in the Romance of the Unknown and the fascination of the back o' beyond.

The first is from Captain Legge, when he was trekking across the Great Thirstland—

"*Tsau,*
"*Ngamiland.*
"*September 27th,* 1909.

"DEAR JOHNNY,

"I have been meaning to write to you for ever so long, but have always put off till now, and now I have so much to tell you that I don't know where to begin or what would interest you.

"Our trek up here through the desert was very long and monotonous. We came right through the desert by an old route no one has used for years,

hoping by so doing to see a lot of game, but in that we were disappointed. We came from Vryburg *via* Kakia, Lehntitung, Okwa, Chanse and so to Tsau. I think you could follow that route on Stanford's map, but am not sure if he marks all the places I mention. We had two thirsts of seven days each to cover and several smaller ones of two, three or four days, but by going hard and practically only trekking at night we got through very well without losing any horses, dogs or anything.

"That trek was not much fun—it was real hard work, and also rather anxious work, as we could get no information of what was in front of us (I don't like hard work), but we got through very well all the same.

"There is, no doubt, a lot of game in the desert, and I think it will remain there for many years to come, owing to the difficulties of hunting in those more waterless parts. I saw lots of spoor of Hartebeest and Gemsbuck, but did not hunt much, as I did not like to work the horses when they had to dc without water, although they did just as well on sama (wild melon) as water. In fact, after they had not seen a drop of water for seven days, they preferred to graze instead of drink when we got to water. I had difficulty to make them eat sama, but when once they took to it they would go and find it for themselves. On the way up I shot two Gemsbuck, one Koodoo, one Wildebeest, two Springbuck and two Hunting Dogs, but nothing big, the best Gemsbuck was a *very* old bull with thick, short horns of 33 inches. The Koodoo is a poor one of 36 inches in straight line. But still I am very pleased with them, as it meant hunting all alone,

I had no boys out with me, and did all the work and had all the fun to myself. My great triumph was spooring up a Koodoo all by myself, but I did not shoot him, as he was small. I could have shot an Eland bull, but he again was small and I spared him. I rode him to a standstill, and I think I enjoyed that hunt as much as any I have ever had.

"But on our arrival here we both went nearly mad with excitement, as after that abominable waterless desert we suddenly turned up in a perfect heaven on earth—splendid water everywhere, beautiful palm-trees, great papyrus swamps and a magnificent game country. We got lost, and had a baddish two days coming in here, and fetched up at a place about twenty miles from Tsau on the marshes. And there I saw more ducks than I could have believed possible. Swarms of them in all directions —Yellow Bills, Pink Bills, Spur-wing Geese, Knob-billed Geese, Pigmy Geese, Cape Pochard, Whistling Duck (*Dendrocygna fulva*) and *D. viduata*, Hottentot Teal, and White-backed Duck. Imagine my excitement then! Ducks everywhere and most of them quite new to me. I had a great flight that night, and skinned a pair of each sort. I am trying to get all the ducks that are here, but some of them have beat me till now. I have seen no Wigeon yet, a bird I want badly.

"We stayed here for a time and collected a lot of birds, fishes, etc., and then I went on a hunt with the police officer here up the Tamerlakan to the Mababe flats, and got everything I wanted, but again no big heads. I got two fair sable 40 inches and 42½ inches, two roan cows, both shot in mistake for

bulls—I can't distinguish the sexes on the veldt—two Lechwe 27 inches, two Sassaby 16¾ inches, one Pallah 21½ inches, one Reed Buck 14½ inches, one Koodoo, one Warthog, and I lost a good roan bull, which took away two bullets, and I followed his spoor eight hours with bushmen and never came up with him. On getting back here again the chief wanted me to go with him on a lion hunt, so I went, and have just returned. We saw no lion nor even heard one, but I saw buffalo, and had the deuce of a hunt, but alas and alas, lost a very big old bull badly wounded. I stuck to him all day long, but he did us in the end. I also shot another roan cow, a very big one, 27 inches—I could have sworn it was a bull, but no, my luck is dead against me with the roan—a Warthog, a Pallah 22 inches, a Reed Buck, and a Wildebeest cow. That leaves only three things that I want from here still to be got—a Buffalo, a Hartebeest and a Sitatunga. I have been out several mornings in the marshes for a Sitatunga, but have not seen one yet. However, I live in hopes, as when the young grass begins to grow they leave the swamps and feed more on the islands. A Sitatunga is a head one does not often see in private collections, and here am I in the hope of them. I *must* get one. Well, I am afraid this is a dull letter. I am no good at correspondence, but I shall have a lot to tell you when I get home. I am now able to appreciate your *Breath from the Veldt*, and I like the book much better now that I know the life and the same sort of country, and the game itself. Your pictures of sable are the beasts themselves, and they are, as you say, the finest beasts in Africa.

Well, good-bye now. Please give my kind regards to Mrs. Millais.

"Yrs. ever,
"GERALD LEGGE."

Poor Gerald was killed in Gallipoli in August 1915 whilst bravely leading his men into action. It was a fitting end for a modest and noble man.

Lord William Percy, too, gives an interesting account of his wanderings in search of American ducks—

"*Cosmos Club,*
"*Washington D. C.,*
"*January 9th,* 1914.

"MY DEAR JOHNNY,

"I wonder how and where you are and whether you have had a good trip and are home by now.[1] I think you said you meant to be home by Xmas.

"I'm not going to try and tell you about my journey—there's too much of it, and I don't know where to begin—but I *will* tell you that I have collected every single N. American duck, with the following exceptions, and of a good many I have got some quite good series. I have not got—Wood Ducks (seen, but spared), Steller's and Fischer's Eiders, Barrow's Golden-eye, and the three southern forms of the Black Duck. I don't know what you think, but I am very well satisfied with that record, that is, if I get my things home safely.

"I may as well confess that I am now getting a bit 'stale.' I have never stopped going since I saw

[1] I was in East Africa at this time.

you (except for between a fortnight and three weeks), and some of it has been pretty tough work. Two hundred duck skins is a lot of labour, as you know, and it has all been hard collecting, as I have never had a big shoot as we think of big shoots in England. I wish I had some one with me—this skinning is the very devil when you come in tired in the evening.

"The interval I spoke of was spent in going through private collections and the museums. They are great collectors in this country. Private collections of 5, 10, 15, 25 *thousand* skins, but they are what I call 'accumulators.' They have scores of duplicates, and seem much more proud of mere numbers than a series of skins that tell you something about the bird's life-history.

"I am now on my way to Florida to get that *A. fulvigula* and see what northern ducks are in the Everglades at this time of the year. I've got a white man to take me in there. They say he is a very queer fellow, but so long as he knows where the ducks are, that is no great matter. Now look you here. I shall arrive in England about the 5th February, and I shall not have much longer there than time to do my soldiering and start again, if my arrangements work out as I hope. I have taken an appointment from the American Museum as 'field naturalist for the year 1914, with the option to renew the appointment in subsequent years.' They very kindly gave it to me in order to give me some official position, which I required in order to get permission to join the U.S. Revenue Cutter *Bear*, that goes to Pt. Barrow in the spring, and also leave to collect in that country and the Aleutians.

"Now I am particularly anxious to see you as

soon as I can. I'd like to get you to Alnwick to look at the things I have got this trip, and they will almost all be there by the end of February.

"Write me a line to 2 Grosvenor Place and tell me your plans and when you are free, and if you won't come up there I must come and see you, if you'll let me.

"I'm afraid Fischer's Eider is no certainty in Alaska now. None have come out of the country for eight years, and none have been seen by collectors who before that got them regularly. I got an old skin some time ago. It's a poor specimen, but I think it will clean up. The duck that interests me most in this country is the Ruddy. He hasn't got any eclipse as far as I can make out, but moults from his red breeding plumage into the brown he spends the winter in, and about now he begins to show signs of the red plumage again. He is a dear little bird, too, I think, and I am most grateful to him for the fact that his skin comes off like a glove!

"What is really the state of things in England, I wonder. Some of the papers here would make one think we were on the brink of civil war, and others say there's nothing in it, and it's all a storm in a teacup. At any rate, I hope my valuable services will be dispensed with. I fancy I shall do better looking for *stelleri* than I should quelling the turbulent Irishman.

"I put out this rotten shoulder of mine two days ago, for the twentieth time, I should think, but it made me as sore as can be and very stiff. However, I think I can still hit *Anas fulvigula* if he gives me the chance.

"Please remember me kindly to your wife and

Puss. I'm sending you on another sheet a rather witty little poem I heard the other day from a man who farms Terrapins for the market!

"Yours ever,

"WILLIAM PERCY.

"'Oh, what becomes,' said Cloe fair,
'Of all the pins that from my hair
I drop unheeded on the floor,
And never see or think of more?'
'My dear,' said Darwin, 'they all go
Into our Mother Earth below;
There their development begins,
And ending—they are Terra-pins.'

"I killed seventeen varieties of ducks at that man's place, and ate Terrapin for dinner (five dollars apiece)—they are better eating than the Gulls were in Labrador."

## CHAPTER VI

### ARTHUR NEUMANN, PIONEER AND ELEPHANT HUNTER

AMONGST the many good friends whom I have lost of recent years was Arthur Neumann, the elephant hunter, a most interesting and charming man. Since no history of his life has appeared, I trust that the following notes may be of interest to my readers.

Arthur Neumann was born on June 12th, 1850, at Hockliffe Rectory, Bedfordshire, his father being the rector of the parish. In 1868 he left for Natal, and took up the work of coffee-planting on an estate near Verulam. During the following year his brother Charles joined him, and together they rented some Government grants of land on the lower Umvoti, Natal, where for a time they cultivated cotton and tobacco. As this venture did not pay, Arthur then tried his hand as a gold-digger in the Transvaal, but soon returned to Natal.

After knocking about for some time, he settled in Swaziland, and established a trading-post there, driving his own wagons with trade goods to and fro in Natal. He soon became a favourite of the Swazi king, Ubandeni, and learnt to speak the language of the natives. In 1877 he spent most of his time shooting in the Transvaal and Swaziland, but at the outbreak of the Zulu War in 1879 he

joined one of the native contingents, and was made a Captain. Later in the same year General Dartnell introduced him to Captain MacLeod of MacLeod (71st Highlanders), who was placed in charge of the Swaziland police. Neumann acted as native interpreter, and was most successful in controlling the scouts and in helping his chief to keep the Swazis quiet at a very critical period, for Ubandeni had already expressed his view to MacLeod, that "not all the white men in the world could defeat the Zulus. They were too strong." One day MacLeod and Neumann were riding near the border when a white man was observed galloping at full speed towards them. He was a mounted messenger from Shepstone bearing an autograph letter from Lord Chelmsford with disastrous news: "The Zulus have overwhelmed our forces at Isandhlwana and all are killed. My son is dead. On no account allow this news to reach the Swazis."

MacLeod, who understood the natives better than Lord Chelmsford did, calculated that only a very short period would elapse before the Swazis knew the whole truth of the disaster, so he thought the matter over and decided to act on his own responsibility. He galloped at once to Ubandeni's kraal and requested an immediate audience. Thousands of Swazis began to arrive, and MacLeod knew that his own and Neumann's life were in imminent peril, for it was quite likely that after the news had been related, he and his companion would be hacked to pieces and the Swazis would at once join the Zulus. MacLeod, however, being a brave man, thus addressed the king—

"Ubandeni, the whole Zulu army has attacked

the British camp at Isandhlwana and destroyed it. I come to tell you this because it is true, but it matters nothing, for the English army will soon come and utterly destroy the Zulu army."

There was complete silence, and the white men were not molested. In a few hours native spies came in and corroborated MacLeod's news, when the king sent for him and said, "Mafu, you speak the truth, and if it takes the whole Zulu army to destroy an English camp—then the English army will win." After this Ubandeni and the Swazis fought loyally on our side, both in this war and the subsequent Basuto rising.

With natives of all kinds it is best to tell the truth, for if MacLeod had acted on Lord Chelmsford's instructions, matters might have been greatly complicated and the war prolonged.

In the Basuto War it was MacLeod's Swazis who surrounded Secukuni in a cave and captured him, although the credit was erroneously given to Colonel Ferreira. At the conclusion of hostilities Sir Garnet Wolseley offered MacLeod the Governorship of Zululand, but the offer was declined.

In 1880 Arthur Neumann rejoined his brother Charles, who had a farm near Maritzburg, and during the first Boer War he went down to Swaziland to look after the fine herd of cattle he had left there in charge of the king. To his disgust, however, he found that the Boers had captured and driven off the whole lot.

Between the years 1880–1887 he travelled and hunted on the Limpopo and Sabi Rivers, where he shot many buffaloes, and in 1888 went north to Mombasa to make inquiries as to the possibilities

of hunting elephants in the new colony of British East Africa. The cost of making such an expedition, however, for the moment deterred him. Nevertheless, he returned to Mombasa in 1890 and took service under the East African Company. His first work was to travel inland with four other white men to the Victoria Nyanza to find a route for the projected railway. On his return from this journey, which was conducted through the hostile Masai country, he again went in with sixty men to try and find an easier way. One night the Masai attacked the camp, and Arthur, who had just risen from his bed, and was in the act of unfastening his rifle from the tent-pole, got a spear through his forearm.

A good line over easy ground was, however, found for the railway, and Neumann returned to the coast, where he found a letter offering him a magistracy in Zululand. This he accepted, but in one year he was tired of the monotonous work, and returned to Mombasa in 1893, where he organised his first big expedition after elephants.

In the three following years he spent all his time wandering in the far interior, then quite unknown, amongst the Ndorobo savages, in the neighbourhood of Mount Kenia and the Lorogi Mountains. Here he occupied himself making friends with the natives, trading, and hunting elephants, with perhaps greater success than has fallen to the lot of any English hunter.

First he made direct for Laiju and the Ndorobo country, east of Mount Kenia. In February 1894 he reached the game country and killed his first elephants. During April he traversed the Jambeni

Range, where he got a few more, and a rhinoceros with a wonderful front horn of forty inches.

He mentions seeing later an even more remarkable horn than this, killed in the same district, which measured forty-eight and three-quarter inches —about a record for Black Rhinoceros.

The same day he met with three different small herds of elephants, and killed eleven, getting three right and lefts.[1] Once he had to beat a hasty retreat, as a swarm of bees attacked him.

Elephant hunting was very difficult and dangerous work in the dense leafy jungles of the Kenia forest, and resulted in many blank days.

Then he went back to the Gwaso Nyiro River. Here he shot a few cow elephants, and then went back to Laiju, sent his ivory to the coast, and went north to look for elephants, in July 1894, to the Ndorobo country. His main camp was at El Bogoi, in the Lorogi Mountains, head waters of the Mackenzie River, a branch of the Tana.

From here he made his first trip to the waterless country south of Rudolf, which was a failure, and no elephants were killed. He then returned to El Bogoi.

However, better luck ensued in September round El Bogoi, where he killed several cows, and later, on the Seya, some fine bulls. On November 15th, 1894, he returned to Laiju.

In December he went north to Lake Rudolph, and struck it at the south-east corner on December 6th. On the east side and far to the north-east of the

[1] One day five bull elephants walked right up to him in the open, and were within ten yards before they saw him and turned. See *Frontispiece.*

lake at Bumi he found many fine old bull elephants. Three bulls that he killed one day had tusks 113 lbs. and 111 lbs.; 112½ lbs. and 108 lbs.; 76½ lbs. and 66 lbs.

On New Year's Day, 1896, his servant Shebame was carried off before his eyes and eaten by a large crocodile. It was at Bumi that he met with a serious accident. An enraged cow elephant charged him, the ·303 missed fire, and Neumann was so closely pursued he could not dodge. The cow got him down and pummelled him with her head and tusk, crushing in his ribs. He was then carried to camp by his natives, who tended him with all the care possible. Fortunately milk was procurable, and he lived on nothing else for weeks. It was two months before he could lie in any position except on his back. Three months afterwards he moved south, and having reorganised his caravan, then returned to Rudolph, and was hunting again in April. Soon he had another great day, killing three bulls with wonderful tusks. One of these had tusks nine feet long, one weighing 117½ lbs., the other 109 lbs.

At last he left Rudolph, and reached El Bogoi on June 3rd, 1896, returning to Mombasa again on October 1st, 1896. Here he sold his ivory, which realised a large sum of money. It was a great disappointment to him to find on his arrival that Count Teleki had already described the new Great Lake of Rudolph, of which Neumann himself thought he was the discoverer.

In 1896 I made the acquaintance of Arthur Neumann, and we soon became close friends. From this date till his death he constantly stayed with

me and his great friend MacLeod of MacLeod (to whom he dedicated his excellent book entitled *Elephant Hunting in East Equatorial Africa*, and published by Rowland Ward & Co. in 1897), and also, when in Africa, he kept up a regular correspondence. He was a man of an extremely shy, hypersensitive nature, and subject to alternate fits of gaiety or depression, but when happy was of such a charming, lovable temperament to all who knew him intimately that his society was a continuous pleasure. In crowds he was like a hunted fox, and it was indeed strange to see a man who would cheerfully face a wounded lion or elephant thrown into a very panic of nervousness by the traffic of Piccadilly. It was certainly not fear, but merely the hatred of noise and confusion that obsessed him. In later years he imagined that nearly every one disliked him, and this obsession grew upon him to such an extent that he avoided all intercourse with people who were often most anxious to be kind to him.

In November 1899 Neumann went to South Africa to take part in the second Boer War, and it can be no surprise to the reader, who may know how some things were managed in that campaign, to learn that such an efficient and highly experienced man, knowing the country thoroughly, and speaking both Boer-Dutch and Zulu, was refused a commission on the Staff, where his knowledge would have been of the greatest value.

Colonel Bethune, however, knew him well, and asked his help to raise an irregular, mounted infantry force, and this was at once forthcoming. When the corps was complete, and had undergone pre-

liminary training at Wynberg, it moved up to Natal, and took part in all the battles in the neighbourhood of Ladysmith until the relief of that town. Neumann had a very narrow escape at Spion Kop, a bullet going through his hat and passing through his hair, whilst a moment later his commanding officer was shot dead at his side. He went in to Ladysmith with the relief force, and at the conclusion of hostilities came home.

Early in 1902 he again returned to East Africa, and went up to the Mount Kenia country, where he intended to stay for some years.

The following is one of his characteristic letters, which gives some account of his life at this time—

"*Mthara (E. of Kenia),*
"*E. Africa,*
"*July 20th,* 1902.

"MY DEAR MILLAIS,

"Would that you could drop in upon me here in my 'boma' and have a cup of tea and chat! I know that you have a kindly feeling towards me and take some interest in my vagaries, but it would be much easier to *tell* you what little there is to tell that is worth hearing than to sit down and write. Still it is a pleasure to send you a letter; so, in your case, my now habitual repugnance to writing when I am in the 'bara' is overcome. I often think of our last meeting at Ward's shoot. It is curious how certain details, sometimes trifling, stand out in one's memory of any particular experience after what might be supposed the more important events have faded. Now the leading impressions left on my mind from that visit were: first, the failure of that old brute of a butler to

bring me any early cup of tea to my bedroom in the morning, by reason of which I (being an old crank much addicted to my own habits) was more or less upset for the whole day; second, being dragged off for a beastly walk on the Sunday, when I would much rather have pottered round with you and Selous; third, my envying Selous going off with you in the afternoon. As I am situated I don't care for England. I feel generally like a hunted fox in a strange country there, and now I never hanker after it the least bit. But I often have thought that if ever I could afford to have a shooting good enough to ask you to, how delightful it would be to have just two or three special friends (I have but very few real ones) to come and stay for a few days, if one could persuade them to spare the time. But this will not interest you; you would rather hear where I have been and what I have poached since I got back to my own country. Well, you know I came up the Tana; and of all the poisonous, sweltering holes I ever was in, that is far and away the most damnable. I wrote and told Selous all about it as soon as I had an opportunity, after I had been right up the river, as I promised him I would. I hope my letter was not too late to be of any use, but I couldn't send him the information he wanted any earlier—you know it takes a long time to do anything in Africa. It's no good wearying you with particulars of all the delays and worries there were before I at last got back to my old haunts here. My headman was a 'rotter' (he is gone now, and good riddance), and I have not such a useful lot of men as I used to have formerly. But I got here at last, and have

now had my headquarters here for some time, and I shall continue to for several months more. My Beluchi friends, about whom I must have told you, played me false, and I have never heard anything of or from them, so I am now left to my own resources. I am not equipped for so long a journey into the wilds on my own, as it is, to the country I hoped to reach—not yet, that is—so for the present I am contenting myself with minor expeditions, with this as my base. I have not been far yet, though I have got a few elephants (of which more anon) already; but I am now about to start on a somewhat longer cruise across the Gwaso Nyiro, where I hope to come upon them in some direction or other and get more and bigger. I tell you what it is, Millais; I take but damned little interest nowadays in shooting any other beast but the elephant; but him I worship—I have become a true Ndorobo in that. Nothing else thrills me; but the spell of the elephant is as potent as ever. There is, between here and the Gwaso Nyiro River, a lot of lava country. The going is most cruel, especially when the grass covers the stones, and it cuts one's boots to pieces in no time. There is one part where the ground is nothing but a mass of black, rough, broken lava débris. It forms low ridges and hillocks, and is overgrown with scrubby bush, but not very thick. There is little or no grass generally in this part. Here a herd of elephants often harbours. They are safe from the Ndorobos, because they dare not tackle them here, as it is impossible to run away among the stones. The herd is a poor one for ivory, and I toiled after it many a day, only

to come back without doing anything, either because the wind would not let me get up to them with any chance of success, or because I could not get at any that I thought worth shooting. But twice I went for them. The first time, after waiting about all day and trying in several directions, I at last was lucky enough to get in and kill four bulls, but poor ones—the best only about 50 lbs. per tusk. There was no particular excitement—nothing much beyond the average, I mean; though there is, I truly tell you, always when you go for them in earnest, and not merely pick off an odd straggler when opportunity offers, a considerable amount of risk about the business. I always feel when I get back to camp, 'Safely through another day.' The last time I got on terms with a herd, after, as I say, many hard and fruitless days and much forbearance, through a reluctance to shoot anything not of good weight, I felt desperate, and said to myself, 'Well, I mean to get some to-day, anyhow; the best I can, of course, but I *must* go for them and get all I can.' I went in, and I had a hottish time. I killed ten—all small ivory, I regret to say—but I wish some of those superior sportsmen who call one 'butcher' and 'slaughterer' and other pretty names when expressing (theoretical) opinions on such work could have tried it for once. I make no profession to be anything but a humble hunter—I rather dislike the title of 'sportsman'; I never know quite what is meant by it. But as to *butchery*, one is just as likely to be made into sausage-meat as the poor little elephants. Several times was I nearly trampled on; and whether accidentally or of malice prepense would make but

little difference to one's appreciation of the process of being mashed into pulp. But I am more cautious than I used to be, all the same, and try not to run into unnecessary danger. I often think now of the rash way in which I have often behaved in times gone by, and wonder that I was not killed over and over again.

"My Rigby ·450 is wonderful.[1] If you should be in town, look in and tell Rigby that really I feel there is no credit left for me with it. All one has to do is to carry the rifle up to the elephants and pull the trigger; they are bound to go down before it. I wish I had ordered a pair. I would give anything to have a second; it would be invaluable in many ways. I find, for one thing, that mine gets so hot after two double shots in quick succession that if one were not obliged to do so in self-defence one could not hold it. I got my left hand unpleasantly burnt that day, and it unsteadies one. I mean to use a glove now, but I doubt if even that will be protection enough. It really ought to have more wood, though, of course, it would look unsightly. But two would be the right thing; then one's gun-bearer would act as loader, and one might often score an extra elephant or two by the gain of time, and even be safer in an emergency. But the gun is perfect as a weapon for my poaching purposes. It is just what I have always felt I wanted for the work. I never waste a cartridge on any other game; my Mannlicher is good enough for such trash as rhinos, etc.

[1] Prior to this Neumann used a ·577 by Gibbs and a double 10-bore by Holland and Holland. He then used a ·303 Lee-Metford, which used to jamb badly.

I never even fired a trial shot. The first cartridge I fired was at an elephant (the fifty-pounder). I wasted the left on him too when he ran, to make assurance doubly sure, as he was by himself; but he didn't go more than 100 yards before he came down with that glorious crash that is the acme of the hunter's exaltation.

"Tell Rigby I will write to him myself later on, when I have killed some monsters and can speak from greater experience of the rifle's performances. The only really big elephant I have shot yet was one alone in quite another part of the country, close to native kraals. It was sundown and he had been alarmed, and I had to take a stern-on shot, and only got the one in. It is a horribly overgrown country, and he was not found for some days. Then I had moved, and a blasted German, who seems to live by preying upon the natives, one of Eliot's protégés, bagged the tusks (a splendid pair), pretending to claim it as an elephant he had shot a month before. He won't give them up, and I can't very well take them by force—it would be too disastrous an exhibition before the natives of the country for two white men to go to war with each other away here in the wilds.

"I don't apologise for the egotism of this letter, because I have nothing else to write about, and I believe you like to hear about my doings. I got a rather nice lion one day, but there was no excitement about the shooting of it, and I don't feel the least elated at killing one—rather bored to have so much trouble with the skin.

"I hope you and yours are well and thriving. Send me a line or two some day (to c/o Smith,

Mackenzie & Co., Mombasa). Give my love to Selous when you see him again.

"Yours ever,

"ARTHUR NEUMANN.

"I have fever pretty often (thanks to the Tana), but between whiles am very well, as I am now (though my liver is more self-assertive than is desirable often), and as happy as possible—not the least lonely.

"P.S.—Glancing through this production, I notice what I say about that pleasant shooting-party at Ward's seems to imply that I did not enjoy it, and reads ungratefully to our kind host and hostess. That is not what I meant to suggest though, at all. I enjoyed myself very much there; and after you and Selous left I still had a most interesting and delightful companion in Abel Chapman, whose acquaintance it gave me the greatest pleasure to make. I only meant that it struck me as being so jolly you and Selous going about together from shoot to shoot.

"With regard to the Mannlicher, I do think, beautiful weapon as it is, that it is rather in the extreme of small in the bore for general purposes in Africa. In spite of its high velocity it has not great penetrative power, owing to the bullet being so light—there is really nothing of it. I have killed all the big beasts with it (bar elephants, and of course it would kill them too), but another time I think I should prefer a double ·400.

"Unless my health should break down I expect to spend two or three years more out here."

After this he killed many elephants, and brought to Mombasa in March over a ton of ivory.

In March 1903 he came down to Mombasa to refit and engage fresh porters. "This time I hope to get further and fare better," he remarks.

He is pretty severe on a certain writer who thinks shooting an elephant is mere slaughter and yet sees no sin in killing a harmless giraffe—

"I saw ——'s new book the other day. What an old hypocrite he is! Why, he actually gives a photo of a dead giraffe. How a man who professes to think the killing of an elephant a horrible crime can shoot a poor harmless giraffe I fail to understand. I suppose his definition of sport to be whatever shooting *he* does, whilst everything else is butchery. I should like to tackle him about that dead giraffe. I do not think much of his innumerable illustrations with telephoto lens. Photography in books is overdone and wearisome. The only way to get really good pictures is for an artist to draw them from life."

In 1903 and 1904 he hunted in Turkana, the northern Gwaso Nyiro, and the Lorian Swamp and Turkwel.

"*Camp on Gwaso Nyiro River,*
"*December 8th,* 1904.

"MY DEAR MILLAIS,

. . . . while your letter was on its way out, I was making my way to the Turkana country. You will have heard something of my doings there from MacLeod, as I have written to him since my return. But it may interest you to see the

weights of my teeth, so I will copy them from my ivory book. Where there is a great difference between the weight of a pair it is because of one having been broken.

"*Teeth*, 1904

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jan. | 19, | 82½ lbs. | and | 80 lbs. | Feb. | 18, 57 lbs. | and 60 lbs. |
| ,, | 20, | 97 ,, | ,, | 104 ,, | March | 2, 72 ,, | ,, 79 ,, |
| ,, | 25, | 48 ,, | ,, | 46 ,, | ,, | 2, 81 ,, | ,, 101 ,, |
| ,, | 31, | 94 ,, | ,, | 104 ,, | ,, | 12, 68 ,, | ,, 67 ,, |
| ,, | 31, | 72 ,, | ,, | 75 ,, | ,, | 12, 94 ,, | (one only) |
| Feb. | 4, | 68 ,, | ,, | 84 ,, | ,, | 12, 24 ,, | ,, 112 lbs. |
| ,, | 9, | 70 ,, | ,, | 78 ,, | ,, | 21, 59 ,, | ,, 68 ,, |
| ,, | 9, | 66 ,, | ,, | 81 ,, | ,, | 21, 92 ,, | ,, 94 ,, |
| ,, | 15, | 76 ,, | ,, | 101 ,, | April | 8, 41 ,, | ,, 79 ,, |
| ,, | 15, | 96 ,, | ,, | 108 ,, | ,, | 8, 53 ,, | ,, 57 ,, |

"Those are the 'Turkana' trip teeth. March 12th, you will notice, was a good day. It was unlucky one having only a single tusk. Of course I couldn't see that, it was in thick bush and raining; but I ought to have got another if I hadn't done an unlucky thing. The first one I got by itself; then I went on and found the others, as I said; and after the first shot at the one I could see, one rushed past me, almost over me. I had a convenient log to crouch behind, and as he ran past on the other side of it I gave him, *stupidly*, *both* barrels, almost touching him with the rifle, having jumped up just as he was level with me. A second later another followed; my rifle empty—gunbearer had fled with second gun! But on my next trip to Lorian, from which I have just returned, I scored a double right and left. At dawn I was down by the swamp. We got there before fully light, and made out what looked at a distance in the dusk like zebra (the zebra there are the big Grévy),

but my Ndorobo said 'bulls'—and bulls they were, ten of them in a clump, solemnly digging roots with a curious, pendulum-like swinging backwards and forwards of one forefoot, and flipping these bulbs into their mouths with their trunks—so quick is this action that they don't seem to take hold of the bulb, but merely to strike in. They were within a few yards of the dense wall of high bulrushes, but I had dropped in for what I call a soft thing—what one *very rarely* gets in elephant hunting—as they were in the open. Well, I was lucky, and scored two with each rifle, and though two had to be despatched, not one had been able to go many yards into the swamp. I thought to myself, 'If I could only do that with driven partridges.' . . . I got a longer tooth this last trip than any yet, though not so heavy as many I have killed; it tapes nine feet five inches along the curve. I don't feel to have fallen off in my hunting form yet, and I think my nerve is calmer than ever, in spite of my advanced years. I don't think I am as enduring as of yore. . . ."

Early in 1905 a big move in the direction of game preservation in East Africa took place. In the main these restrictions were both eminently desirable and necessary if the magnificent fauna of that country were to be preserved, but when protection or limitation in the killing of elephants—especially in the "Hinterland," over which the Game Preservation Society, as well as the Government, had as yet still little power—was to be enforced, Neumann thought he saw in it the germ of personal spite and jealousy. In this he was

not, perhaps, quite correct, but it galled him to think that native hunters, and especially Arab ivory traders, would in future be allowed to continue to kill, or employ others to kill, elephants, whilst he, who had been a pioneer and a man who had made many of the most recalcitrant tribes peaceful, and had taken all risks, should be debarred from killing elephants even far away in the wilderness, where the Government still had no real authority or could prove "occupation." In virile language he thus describes the man whom he considers his chief enemy: "It seems that your intrepid, sanctimonious, giraffe-slaying, bastard-missionary, self-appointed protector of beasts (other than those defenceless ones he is able to pot himself) and almighty law-giver for Africa in general, psalm-smiter-in-chief, this stroll-through-the-country-and-know-more-about-it-than-anybody-else coadjutator of yours in the Game-Preserving Society has been trying to put a spoke in the wheel of your humble servant. May Allah reward him!"

He then wrote a pamphlet for the consideration of H.M.'s Deputy Commissioner (Sir F. Jackson), setting forth the whole conditions of the ivory trade and giving facts as to how the elephants were killed by the natives. He recommended the prohibition of killing all cow elephants, and personally offered his services as "border agent" to control the outlying districts, with the proviso that he be allowed to shoot old bulls to pay the expenses of his caravan.

Neumann was allowed to continue to hunt in the wilderness for a short time, and reached Mombasa with his ivory in July 1906. (His expenses for the three years' trip were over £3000), and as

a better price was to be obtained in London, he sent it there, and at a sale at the Docks it realised £4500.[1]

Neumann was now forced to accept the fact that his adventurous life as an elephant hunter was finished, and that he would not be allowed to return and hunt with the freedom he had previously enjoyed. Thus he writes from Mombasa July 28th, 1906—

"It will sound strange to you, I daresay, and if you were not a close friend I should not dare to say it, but it would seem a poor compliment that the prospect of leaving my country and giving up the life I love makes me sad. I know so well the misery of feeling like a fish out of water, with neither part nor lot in anything at home. Here in my 'nowhere' I have been happy, and never suffered from those terrible fits of depression that weigh me down there. 'Here shall ye find no enemy but —— and hot weather.' I fear I will have to give it up for good, or at all events I shall have to leave my own part and go, perhaps to the Congo Free State. Now I am as well as ever, and able to continue my pursuits in spite of increasing years. If I am compelled to lead a life of stagnation I shall soon get old."

He arrived home in October 1906, and soon after landing he had a severe attack of influenza, which left him weak and depressed. In April he came to stay with me, and seemed to have quite recovered his spirits and good health, and talked of returning

[1] This was without four or five of the best tusks, which he kept for himself as specimens.

shortly to Africa and building a small house on the slopes of Mount Kenia, where it was my intention to go and visit him in the following winter. He then left to pay a visit in the West of England, and returned at once to his rooms in London (on May 29th, 1907), where he died suddenly.

The following note in the *Field*, January 4th, 1908, gives some idea of Neumann's influence with the natives—

"The following is an extract from a letter recently received from a traveller through the wild district of the Samburu tribe to the north of Kenia, in which the late A. H. Neumann lived during his last visit to East Africa. It is of interest to all who knew the charming personality of the man, and shows how great a hold he had won over the affections of the wildest savages by being both a true sportsman and a true gentleman. The name 'Nyama Yangu,' by which he was known to the natives throughout the country, means 'my meat,' and is said to have been given him because when once he had marked down his game he never missed it.

"J. J. WILSON.

"*Mombasa, November 20th.*

"'(*Extract*).

"'*Ngongo, October 25th*, 1907.

"'The first place I struck was a place called Mbusketok. Here I was greeted by a very old Samburu man with open arms and a shout of "Nyama Yangu has returned to us!" (interpreted to me by my Masai boy). Whether I looked any-

thing like Neumann or not I could not tell, as I never had the pleasure of meeting him. After a short conversation with the old man, and having informed him I was not Neumann, he inquired from me if I knew when Neumann was returning. I told him I expected he would be back shortly.

"'The first question put by any Samburu you met was, "Why have Europeans imprisoned Nyama Yango?" Having denied this, and told them it was a lie, they seemed delighted at the hope of his returning shortly. I asked them who had told them this lie, and they said Neumann's Swahili gun-bearer. It did not matter whom you met—Wanderobo, Samburu, Rendile—their first question was "When is Nyama Yangu returning?" He must have had an extraordinary influence among them. They also told me he never accepted any presents from them unless they would take their equivalent value in what they wanted, such as wire and Americani. On my way to Kenia I went into one of Neumann's camps. His house, if you could call it one, was a small grass-and-mud hut, round which were a few shelves, a small, rickety table, but no chair. What surprised one most was his bed—an exact copy of the native bed, made of sticks tied lengthways and others tied crossways, most hard and uncomfortable. He must have been as hard as nails, for I should certainly have preferred to sleep on the ground rather than on his bed.

"'From what I gathered from my interpreter, when the Samburu are convinced that Neumann is dead their intention is all to trek north. He must have been a little god among them; he settled their troubles and advised them when they came

to him for advice; and while he was among them they were not afraid of being raided by other tribes, for they said he would see that they were not interfered with by anybody.' "

Immediately after poor Neumann's death occurred one of those strange events with which we are occasionally confronted in life, and which are as interesting as they are difficult to explain even by scientific men who have made the subject of spirit materialisation their especial study. We may or may not believe in the communion of two spirits who are so closely in sympathy with each other that both thought transference and even spirit manifestation between them is possible, but that it does occur in rare instances seems to be an undoubted fact. I will therefore make no further comment on the following extraordinary events, but merely state facts which I believe to be quite above all suspicion either of fraud or hallucination.

It would appear that about the year 1876 Arthur Neumann and his brother Charles, whilst farming in Natal, were intimately associated with a family named Jackson, who had a little daughter named Noomi, to whom Arthur was devotedly attached. She was his godchild, and as she grew up Arthur, who had considerable private means, asked leave to adopt her, but this was refused. Between Noomi and the hunter, however, there existed a bond of affection which was so close and intimate that neither time nor absence affected. She addressed him always as " Uncle Arthur," and wrote to him constantly of all her childish hopes and

ambitions. It was, in fact, a bond of sympathy between two human beings in which even the disparity of age could make no difference. At the time of Neumann's death Noomi Jackson was at a convent school in Belgium, and the whole account of the appearance of Neumann to Noomi Jackson is contained in the following letter from Mrs. Jackson to Charles Neumann—

"*Kenilworth Court,*
"*Putney, S.W.*
*September 4th*, 1907.

"DEAR MR. NEUMANN,

"Thank you so much for your kind letter received this morning, which has been a great comfort to me. I shall now do my best to let N. continue her studies, which she is so anxious to do.

"In regard to the extraordinary incident I mentioned to you, I will do my best to write it down, and tell you all that happened.

"First of all, I must say that it was my earnest desire that Noomi should not know how her Uncle N. (as she always called him) met his death, so I never mentioned anything about him until the Tuesday following, in my usual weekly letter. My few words were, 'I have very sad news for you. Poor Uncle Neumann died suddenly on Wednesday and was buried on Saturday.' That letter was delayed three further days. When I met my daughter at Charing Cross on the 6th of August, almost her first words were, 'Mother, please tell me the truth about Uncle N.' I said, 'What do you mean, dear?' She then said, 'You can't deceive me, Mother; just tell me. Did he die

because a woman wouldn't love him?' I said, 'Why do you ask such a question?' She replied, 'Oh, Mother, tell me the truth. He came and told me himself, and is suffering so terribly.' Then she told me how the apparition took place.

"On the Wednesday following Arthur's death, she was in the church with Mère Paul, helping to clean and dust. She was up a ladder hard at work, when she looked round and saw one of her school friends (whom she knew to be away at the time) coming towards her. She says she felt great surprise and shock at seeing her friend in nun's dress. The nun came up to her and beckoned to her to come down from the ladder, and she tells me it was with a 'curious, funny' feeling she saw herself on the ladder, and she was on the ground. The nun then took her by the arm and led her away through a side door of the church where she had never been before, and through the nuns' refectory, where no one is allowed, and into their private chapel. She can describe everything and the pictures on the walls. She was brought to one of the pews, where she knelt down, and felt some one near her. She looked up, and she says there was Uncle Neumann standing by her. Her first thoughts were, 'Mother never told me he was coming to Belgium.' But she felt something was wrong, his face bore such terrible suffering. He came up and placed his hand in hers and said, 'N., my life has now passed away. A woman wouldn't love me, and my sufferings are terrible. I never believed what I ought to have on earth. Pray for me.' Earthly prayers, he told her, helped him more. After that the same nun came and led her out of

the church, and she found herself on the ladder, dazed. She managed to get down. Mère Paul noticed she looked very white and ill, so took her away, and she laid down for some hours.

"Since then he has appeared to her every morning early, about three or four, but only for a moment. He has never spoken again, but each time his expression is changing and a happier look is on his face. Her words to me were, 'Oh, Mother, I have prayed so! I want to forget the awful suffering on his face when I first saw him. That look is going now.' He came to her as usual the day she left, but nothing has been seen here. I am told that in all probability she will see him again on her return; the atmospheric conditions are against it here.

"The child seems to take it very calmly. What worried her so dreadfully was not knowing the truth, as she says she dared not write and ask me about it, as all their letters are read, so she had to wait until she came home. She told Mère Paul about it in confidence, otherwise she could not have borne it. You will understand how worried I have been. I feared so for her, whether it might affect her. I have never in my life known of a more extraordinary thing. One cannot explain away the fact that she was told everything—all I had intended she should never know—by him. There is no one over there who knows anything about him or ourselves.

"Each morning between the two bells he stands by her bedside and makes her understand he is happier, but he never speaks now. I should like you to meet my daughter. She returns to school

on the 2nd of October. She tells me she does not mind at all seeing him again, otherwise I should not allow her to go back, but her heart is in her work. My mind is relieved now I have told you all, and if we all add our prayers to the child's they will help to bring comfort to the sorrowing one.

"Yours very sincerely,
"B. JACKSON."

Selous was very much interested in this account, a copy of which I sent him, and thus writes (October 25th, 1907)—

"MY DEAR JOHNNY,

"The letter you sent has interested me very much. My father was a great friend of Alfred Russell Wallace, who was, and is, a confirmed spiritualist, and when I was a boy I often heard Dr. Wallace tell my father and mother of what he considered well-authenticated cases of houses being haunted and the spirits of dead people appearing to the living. But this case of the apparition of poor Neumann to Noomi Jackson presents some most remarkable features. In the first place, the verbal communication was very curious, for apparitions are, I think, always, or nearly always, silent. The second curious fact is that when Noomi looked round whilst standing on the ladder she saw one of her school friends, *whom she knew to be away at the time*, coming towards her. This figure was dressed in nun's dress, and led her to the chapel where Neumann's spirit appeared to her.

"Another very significant fact is that Noomi, when on the ground beside the nun, experienced a curious, funny feeling, and *saw herself still on the ladder*. Now it would be most interesting to learn, and we ought to try and find out, whether Noomi's school friend, who was supposed to be away at the time, really came to Noomi in bodily form dressed as a nun and led her to the private chapel where she saw the apparition of Arthur Neumann. We ought also to try and find out whether Mère Paul, who was in the chapel with Noomi, and must have been near her when she was working on the ladder, ever saw her get down from the ladder and meet her school friend in nun's dress, then leave the chapel with her, and after a time return to the church and again get up the ladder, for when she got down in bodily form Mère Paul at once noticed that she looked very pale and ill. Now I believe that Noomi's body never left the ladder at all. Neumann's spirit probably could not get *en rapport* directly with hers, but was able in some way to cause the spirit of her school friend to quit its bodily case and communicate with the spirit of Noomi, and bring it to the chapel, where he was able to appear to, and to make a communication to it. You may not be able to understand this, but I believe that it will be proved that Noomi's friend knows nothing about having visited the church in nun's dress. I believe that the figure in nun's dress that called Noomi was as much a spirit as the apparition of Neumann—the one was a spirit of the living, the other a spirit of the dead. Both would probably be invisible to Mère Paul, or to

all but a few exceptionally organised people. That is my explanation. The spiritual essence of Noomi, which will survive the death of her body, saw and recognised another disembodied spirit of the living and obeyed its summons, leaving its own body as it were in a trance on the ladder. All that subsequently happened before the spirit again returned to its bodily case may have happened in the briefest possible space of time, as in a dream. After all, how can such things be explained? That they sometimes occur when two souls are in deep sympathy with one another I firmly believe. I hope to see you again and talk over this very curious experience."

On the receipt of this latter MacLeod and I went at once to Putney and had an interesting interview with Mrs. Jackson and her daughter, who corroborated in every detail the circumstances already narrated. Noomi Jackson impressed me as a singularly charming girl of a *spirituelle* character, and yet full of abundant common sense. The clarity and truthfulness of her story is unquestionable, and she could under no circumstances have known of the facts of Neumann's death, even if she had been informed in some way (which was not the case) that he was dead. It only remains to state that all Selous' reasoning was, as usual, absolutely sound. Mère Paul[1] knew nothing of Noomi's experience until she told it herself, whilst no one but Noomi seems to have seen the apparition of the absent friend who led her to the chapel,

[1] Shortly after this event Mère Paul died.

neither did this friend herself know that she had appeared in the chapel to Noomi. Who then shall judge of these things, or even deny that we possess a spirit, as well as a material body?

The whole facts of this case were laid before the Society of Psychical Research, and published in their Journal, May 1908. Miss Noomi Jackson was present at this meeting, and submitted to cross-examination by members. In this report Miss Jackson is referred to as "Miss Wilson," Arthur Neumann as "Captain Oldham" and Mère Paul as "Mère Columba." Professor Barrett remarked that it was the most interesting and impressive case that had come under his notice.

In this age of celebrated mediocrities England always ignores her best men, and gives them no help at the time when they most need it. Our pioneers succeed in doing great things, not with her help, but in spite of it, for the British Foreign and Colonial Offices are both the most colossally ignorant as well as unimaginative bodies in existence, and would rather place a ban on individual exploration than assist it.[1] Great things have been done in Africa by quiet, unpretentious men like Selous, Livingstone, Speke, Grant, Thomson, Burton and

[1] As an instance of this the following may be cited: Prior to 1914 the Indian Government, whilst placing a veto on all English explorers, gave every assistance to such foreigners as Sven Hedin, a Swede, who did everything to foster German propaganda and vilify England in the Great War, and another person of German extraction. These men explored and mapped the Hinterland of Thibet, the Pamirs and the route to Mongolia, and received honours and distinctions from our Geographical Society. We seem to have a perfect genius for nursing vipers in our bosom.

Neumann, who cared nothing for worldly applause, but were only bent on gaining a knowledge of the Great Unknown, and at the same time making peace with the savages, so that all who came after might have an easy road. It is our pioneers who really conquered the great interior and gave to us our African Empire. Their victory lasts beyond their little day, for that initial spear-head of courage and noble conduct is the apex of all future advancement, and if these men were not our very best gentlemen—in the true sense of the word—progress would have been delayed for a generation, and other nations would have taken our place.

Up on the ramparts of Quebec stands a magnificent monument to Champlain, who was the first explorer to plunge into the Canadian wilderness in olden days. That statue, by far the finest in the New World, is of a Frenchman by a Frenchman, but then our Gallic neighbours have enthusiasm and imagination, and it needed their romantic outlook to place it there in a beautiful position above the St. Lawrence in a British town.

Some day that rare combination—a rich man with fine ideas—will get to work and put up a statue to Arthur Neumann in Nairobi, for the so-called elephant hunter did as much, and more, than Champlain ever did to explore Canada. But Arthur Neumann was only an Englishman, so we may have to wait a long time, despite the fact that 25,000 settlers are to-day (July 10th, 1919) waiting to take up land on East African highlands about Mount Kenia, which country Neumann

made it possible for us to enter without firing a shot at a native.[1]

[1] About the time that Neumann was living up amongst the natives of Kenia, John Boyes went and lived amongst the Kikuyu, at that time a dangerous lot of caravan raiders whom no white man dared to approach. Boyes was much trusted by certain sections of the Kikuyu, and did a great deal to keep them quiet, although he went there purely as a trader on his own account. But when certain Kikuyu attacked British outposts Boyes was held responsible, and prosecuted by the East African Government—a gross outrage. After being confined for some months he was acquitted. John Boyes, "King of the Kikuyu," is a gallant fellow of the old adventurer type, and I take my hat off to him as one who has been greatly misrepresented. Now he lives quietly on his farm near Nairobi, where I had the pleasure of meeting him in 1918.

## CHAPTER VII

### SCOTTISH SALMON-FISHING

It is somewhat painful to admit the fact, but from time immemorial the proverbial fisherman is supposed to inherit the taint of Ananias. So rooted is this conception that even exact records of facts are apt to be received with incredulity. We of the old school who crossed the North Sea in the good ships *Tasso*, *Eldorado* and *Sappho* of a truth listened to fish tales in the smoking-room that fairly made us gasp. The man who, on being asked the size of a monster salmon he had landed, replied that "he did not know, but it must have been immense, since on its capture he noticed the river had fallen a foot," was regarded as a poor creature in comparison with the giant who asserted that the steamers on the Fraser River often threw with their paddles on the deck such a quantity of salmon that the ship was in danger of being submerged. As a matter of fact, an audience of fishers love these old romances, not only because they add to the joy of life, but because they enable each and every one to tell his own story of some marvellous happening, and know that (true or *otherwise*) it will be accepted in its proper ratio.

Truth is often fiction and fiction truth, since many novels are more true to life than ponderous blue books, and it is indeed a curiously unobservant

fellow who has not some tale to tell within the ken of his own experience that savours of the marvellous, even though it may be perfectly true.

We have, for instance, the story of Captain Campbell, who, fishing one day with minnow in the Taupo River, New Zealand, played and lost a large trout which broke him. Being tired of fishing he wandered for a mile along the side of the Taupo Lake, where he saw Lord Lewisham engaged in playing a good fish which he had hooked with a "dry" fly. Captain Campbell got out his net and landed the fish, in whose jaw was the identical minnow he had lost twenty minutes before. It appears the trout, after breaking Captain Campbell, had left the river and passed straight for a mile out into the lake, where he had at once taken Lord Lewisham's fly. Now both actors in this curious incident only tell this extraordinary story to such as they hope will believe it. But incredible as it may seem, it is perfectly true.

Taking into consideration, therefore, the fact that our most veracious tales may be liable to misconstruction, it requires a certain courage to lay before a public, which I hope is kind, any stories of the lake and river that are slightly out of the normal.

Andrew Lang used to think there was a great deal of disinterested malevolence in the man who questioned "What have you caught?" when he knew well that the subject was painful to you and that you had caught nothing, and yet the poet himself seems to have caught some of this spirit of malevolence when he asserts that the unsuccessful angler—in which category he places himself—is happiest when "watching the skill, or deriving a perverse

consolation from the failures of some more accomplished friend." On the other hand, let us hope there are a few sympathetic souls who have sometimes toiled hard and caught nothing themselves, and who when you have achieved some success will rejoice with you. It is to these nice people I address the following little tales of the river.

Every man who is a devotee of some sport, once he has mastered a few of its technicalities, is apt to indulge in superlatives. He has conquered perhaps some of its finer points, and therefore is apt to place that particular form of amusement on what may be a higher pinnacle than it is entitled to. My son, aged seventeen, with the certainty and comprehensiveness of youth, having caught one black and ugly monster in the River Tilt, tells me that salmon-fishing is the finest sport in the world. Perhaps he is right and perhaps not. At any rate, it is a mean creature who will cavil at such enthusiasm. Yet there are many fine points in most sports, and the more we excel at anything, or better still, as in the case of salmon-fishing, if we have good luck—the more we are disposed to eliminate superlatives and thank our stars for those golden days when fortune smiles upon us.

Having fished for trout and salmon for more than forty years, I can truthfully say that good luck in the latter sport is often more important than skill. There are many days, even on the best rivers, when no matter what your experience may be with the fly, minnow, prawn or worm, you will never move a fin, whereas there are other days when the veriest tyro, unable to cast ten yards, and who simply trails a fly at the end of the boat, will catch

four or five salmon. It is, of course, true that the superior fisherman, especially when he knows any particular river, and has comprehension of where the fish will lie in spate or drought, will always catch two or three times as many fish as the indifferent angler, but then that is what must always be. Whereas, however, it takes exceptional skill to kill the slowest-moving trout, the expert salmon angler has fewer chances of doing wonderful things, because it is only on rare occasions that salmon are plentiful and the river just in that condition when they will rise, and even then a duffer may do as well as an expert. I remember such a day at Stobhall about the year 1887, when Mr. Murray of Taymount, an excellent fisherman, thought he had done well when he had killed nine good fish, but on one beat higher up on the same day, a boy of eighteen, the son of the clergyman of Birnam—this being his first day's salmon-fishing—killed nineteen salmon.[1] He was, in fact, playing fish all day. The next day, too, my aunt, Mrs. Stibbard, who is a good angler, killed sixteen in Burnmouth, no mean physical feat for a lady, as they were all big fish. Thus salmon-fishing being so much a matter of chance in getting plenty of fish and suitable water just at the right time, we have to pray that it may be our luck to be there on such fortunate occasions. But no matter how hard we work or how often we go the occasions will be rare—sometimes dishearteningly so.

From the foregoing it may seem that my conclusions lead to the point that no special skill is required to kill salmon. That is far from being

[1] It must be explained that in this instance all these fish were caught "harling."

the case. Personally I have never used anything but the fly, but that does not blind me to the fact that an extraordinary amount of skill is required both to cast and work properly the minnow and the prawn. Such a man as Captain Campbell, who will go any time in the autumn and take out fish from the free waters above Perth when other anglers just look on in amazement, knows something more about minnows, how to use and change them according to light and temperature of the water, and depth at which to float them, than the ordinary angler. He understands fully the finer points of this class of fishing, and his exceptional skill will have its just reward. I have seen, too, men using prawn, both in Ireland and on the Tay, in a manner that excited my admiration. They also had reached a high level in this particular branch of fishing, though I must confess it never appealed to me, even when they hooked fish which I knew would never rise to my fly.

Perhaps, therefore, this very "chancey" nature of salmon-fishing may account for its great popularity, for the duffer knows that given the best conditions he too may do as great things as the expert. Moreover, it is in the nature of man to desire some unusual reward for his labour—and casting all day with a nineteen-foot rod is certainly labour—and this is ever present, for having once killed a twenty-pounder, there is always a hope that the very next fish may be a thirty-pounder, and so on, till even the more or less mythical fifty-pounder comes within the ken of possibilities. Yet these big things are given to the few, in Scotland, at any rate. I remember Mr. Charles Murray, who

has killed more fish on the Tay than any other living man, telling me that until he was sixty-three his largest salmon was 35 lbs. Yet after this he landed one of 42 lbs. At different times I have fished most of the Highland salmon rivers, from the Tweed to the Thurso, but have never had any good sport except on the Tay, where I know every yard of the river from Killin to Glencarse, below Perth. For twenty-five years, from 1870 to 1896, my father, who was a very keen and expert angler, rented various beats. His earliest experience, after renting different rivers in Sutherland, notably the Helmsdale and Shin (where he had wonderful sport in the 'fifties and 'sixties), was on the Stanley Water when John Leech was his guest. The views of the latter in his first essays in salmon-fishing, seen in the amusing pictures of the adventures of Mr. Briggs, are well known to readers of *Punch*. After the year 1870 my father rented various beats on the river, but had little good sport until he took the Murthly Water in 1883. This excellent piece of the river—then at its best in autumn—he retained until the new proprietor, wishing to fish there himself, came to live at Murthly. Then he took Stobhall, possibly the best beat in Scotland, for a few years, and afterwards fished Ballathine, Benchil and other beats until his death in 1896. My father loved to fill his house with his friends in autumn, and so in the nature of things the opportunities of good salmon-fishing—usually crowded within the dates September 25th to October 18th—were seldom realised by his own sons. There were always, too, many keen fishermen in the house. On the six miles of water my father allowed only two

boats, *i. e.* two rods, so that those who could enjoy the best sport were really few. Wherefore my brothers and I as often as not sought our sport in other waters. Nevertheless, there was always an odd day to be had, even at the "crowded" time, and so it fell to my lot to experience some grand days of sport with the big fish.

I think the best three days I ever had were October 9th to 11th, 1889, when I killed twenty-one salmon, averaging 21 lbs. The first two days were on the lower beat of Murthly, when I caught seven and six respectively, and the third day on Burnmouth, when I captured eight. The average of these fish was exceptional even for the Tay, but the fish ran big that year, and we caught one hundred and twenty between August 22nd and October 10th, yet the largest fish of the season was only 32 lbs.

My father was always hoping to kill one of those monsters which usually appeared about October 1st and seldom looked at a fly, but one day in 1887 he rose and hooked a very big fish in the still water in front of Miller's house, and after a gallant struggle of an hour he landed his prize. It was a clean-run fish of 44 lbs., and his joy was great. In 1895 an enormous fish was seen jumping several times at Ballathine. Father tried for him several times, and at last rose and hooked him. Haggart, the fisherman at Stobhall, who was one of the few men who had actually killed a veritable sixty-pounder, told me afterwards that this was the biggest fish he had ever seen on the Tay, and was as excited as my father when the great struggle began and the giant leaped clear of the water. The fight lasted for two hours, and then the fish suddenly dashed up-stream,

ran on to a dead tree and broke the cast. It was a veritable tragedy, and one which my unfortunate parent could never refer to afterwards without emotion. Yet if the biggest fish always get away, he had some compensation in knowing that he had killed five fish over 40 lbs. between the years 1886 and 1896, and that might be sufficient reward to most anglers. But who indeed—let alone fishermen—is ever satisfied in this world?

The mere description of salmon-fishing and salmon killing is apt to become monotonous. Nearly every fish plays just in the same way with more or less vigour according to place, power of water and freshness of arrival from the sea, so I will not trouble my readers with anything except just those little incidents of sport which are somewhat exceptional. Personally I always liked fishing in certain spots on the Tay where I knew fish frequented and were difficult to lure. There is one such place, known as Thistlebrig stream, under the cliffs below Stanley, which always gave me particular joy. This is one of the few runs on the Tay where by wading it is possible to kill a good fish when the river is dead low. At such times the river is forced into a narrow channel, where the stream is so broken and swift that it is very difficult to work a boat. Accordingly I used to fish it by wading in from the north bank. Its peculiar attraction lay in the fact that if you hooked a fish above the size of a grilse it invariably dashed straight down-stream to a great still pool on Benchil, a distance of two to three hundred yards. The time given to the angler to turn round and hurry ashore, whilst letting the fish run, was only half a minute, and by the time you had got over

A GOOD DAY'S SALMON-FISHING ON THE MURTHLY WATER, RIVER TAY
15 FISH, 2 RODS, OCT. 9, 1889. AVERAGE WEIGHT 21 LBS.

the slippery rocks to sound footing probably the greater part of your line was out and you had to run at full speed. I lost certainly more fish than I killed, but when one did happen to gain the advantage, usually when the fish hesitated before his first run, the subsequent run and fight were something worth living for. I remember in particular killing a stout twenty-five-pounder that had me out twice to the last turn of the line on the reel, and yet each time, by getting below him by hard racing, I was at Benchill pool first, and he was mine.

Another favourite run at dead low water in August is the Eels-brig stream on Stobhall. This is even swifter than Thistlebrig, but it can be worked by casting from a boat at the side. It was here, on August 12th, that I killed what I consider to be the best fighting salmon I have ever seen. August the 12th was certainly a curious day to go salmon-fishing, for when in Scotland I seldom missed the first day at the grouse, but on this occasion our party had fallen through for some reason, and, meeting Mr. James Pullar, he asked me if I cared to fish Stobhall on that day, so I gladly accepted. My old friend Haggart met me at Stanley station, and said what I thought myself—that the only chance was to try the Eels-brig stream, where he had seen a fish or two jumping.

I put on a fine cast and a small grilse-sized "Dusty Miller," the best fly on the Tay for late evening or dead low water. At almost the first cast I rose and hooked a small grilse of 5 lbs., and killed him in a few minutes. We worked down the stream until it was going at racing pace just over the fall and it was no longer possible to hold the boat.

"You're over it, Maister John," remarked Haggart as I gave a final cast.

At this moment the rod was nearly torn from my hand, and the reel screamed as a fish took the fly and dashed down-stream to a great pool below. It was possible to follow him, so down we went in one mighty swoop. Then suddenly the fish made for the north bank, whirled upwards to the re-entering angle of the pool, whilst the line sagged badly with this quick manœuvre. For a moment I thought we had hold of an ordinary fish, and told Haggart to work in-shore so that I could jump out and try to prevent it getting back to the strong current. We had, however, hardly touched the stones when the salmon made a most magnificent rush right across the river, a distance of a hundred and twenty yards. It was all my experienced boatman could do to keep pace with this movement and prevent a complete run-out, and when at the end of the effort the salmon leaped, as they often do, I saw at once that we had hold of something unusual. It was evidently a fish somewhere about 40 lbs., and shone like silver.

We now crossed the river as I took in line, and had just got on fighting terms again when once more this gallant fish went straight across the river to the south bank. It was more difficult to hold him this time, as the course taken was slightly up-stream and we had to fight current and fish at the same time. But the good "Malloch" cast and fly held in spite of the unusual strain, and, with a few rounds of line to spare, we crossed and worked up swiftly through the slack water till I was once more opposite my fish and could get some command of

him. After several gallant rushes this virile fish again took another run to the north bank, but this time we followed him more easily, and the subsequent strain was sufficient for a time to prevent him from getting back into the main current in the centre of the river, where he could do as he liked. For three-quarters of an hour this gallant salmon never rested for a moment. Unlike most big fish, he absolutely scorned to be sulky, and continued to battle until the very last moment. At least twenty times I thought I had him done, and yet there was always another spurt, and out I had to let him go. But even the powers of such a warrior have their limits, and at last Haggart, who was a skilled gaffer, and not averse to "wettin' his feet," ran into the river and got his cleek home. Though perhaps not as large as we had hoped, it weighed 36½ lbs. The freshness of its advent from the sea had accounted for the great fight this fish put up. I have killed many salmon, from the little fellows of the Flekkefjord of Norway to the giant Tyee of British Columbia, but never have I seen one fight so continuously or so fiercely without a moment's pause as did that Eels-brig fellow. I sent the fish to my wife, to whom I was then engaged, in a little village in Lincolnshire. She wrote, "Your big salmon made a sensation here. The entire village turned out to see it, and the miller arrived with his scales in a cart to weigh it, for such a creature had never been seen before, and they couldn't believe it was a salmon. Nearly every one in the place had a piece."

Although very fond of a day at the salmon, most of my time was spent in shooting, so I hardly

deserved to come within the category of those fortunate or misguided beings who spend all their days on the river and hope to achieve the angler's triumph. But we never know our luck. The season of 1888 had nearly gone, and as the last day of my vacation from Cambridge had arrived and hardly a fish had come to my rod, my father generously gave me his beat on the upper water at Murthly, and also came in the boat to have a chat. It was one of those rare days when only big fish are rising. In the first stream I killed two splendid salmon, 25 lbs. and 27 lbs., and in the next another of 25 lbs. Since fish of the first quality were rising, I wished to try the quiet water in front of Miller's house, where one of the monsters had been seen jumping every day for the past week. There was little chance of moving him, as my father had offered him half the flies in the book during this time, but there was just a possibility he might be in a taking humour. This beat is probably the most difficult to fish in the whole river, as the water is almost still, and it is necessary to throw a very long line. We had passed the best of it, and my father had already told Miller to go in, and that we would have lunch. But that last cast is often the fateful one, and in this case it was so, for just as I raised the rod to take in line there was a slow boil, and I struck. A slight jerking of the line after tightening suggested a small or badly hooked fish.

"I expect that is a grilse," remarked my father. "Let us go ashore and kill him."

It seemed as if the fish had heard such an insult to his proportions, for with one mighty rush he was

halfway across the river and out of the water in a great spasmodic effort.

"The Calf, by all that is wonderful!" we all exclaimed, as the great body hurled itself into view.

"Age doth not wither nor custom stale" the minds of anglers when they see a really big fish hooked. For years their imagination has pictured just this one moment, so we may be forgiven if the actors in this exciting drama were all suddenly changed from phlegmatic humans wanting their lunch to crazy enthusiasts tearing at the oars to follow the retreating monster, and praying that the hook "had a good hud." The boat fairly leapt across the river, until the line seemed quite short. It was, however, only a momentary pause, for away the fish went up-stream, making the line hiss on the sleeping current. Backwards and forwards he fought for a full quarter of an hour, and then came to the usual "sulks." Stones dropped about him at last aroused him to action, rather too furious to be pleasant at first, and then more sulking amongst big rocks in the centre of the river. This time it took quite a long time to move him, as I dared not be too hard, since only a single gut cast and a grilse-sized "Jock Scott" had to bear the strain. But he moved out, and the usual tiring-out process began. Yet so heavy was the fish that we simply had to follow where he wished, and, as he kept boring across the river, once more we let him go, till I had him in quite still water opposite the fisherman's house. Here he gave endless trouble, and I began to fear that with such repeated turns and twists the head of the fly might become worn out and part. He absolutely refused to come

near the bank, even where the water was deep, so we got the boat fixed with her stern out in the river, and here Miller watched in the depths with gaff ready, whilst every time the salmon showed side and a consequent weakening, I tried to swing him with the stream to the gaffing point. At last salmon nature was exhausted, and I worked the vanquished hull across the area of capture. There was a quick plunge of the steel. Miller's broad back shook and heaved, and then there was a crash, and the fisherman measured his length across the seat of the boat. At the same moment the great head and shoulders of the salmon rolled over the edge of the gunwale, and giving itself an extra heave, the fish fell into the boat as the broken gaff fell out of its side. Thus was victory achieved. This was certainly the biggest salmon any of us had seen at Murthly. Our weighing machine being out of order, the fish was not put on the scales until two days afterwards in Malloch's shop—where I had sent it to be cast—and then it turned the scale at 46 lbs., but I think it must have been about 2 lbs. heavier at the time of capture.

Nearly all salmon-fishing with the fly is alike, and ninety-nine fish out of a hundred behave in exactly the same manner. The small ones have a way of coming to the gaff and the big ones possess a nasty habit of getting off at the last minute. Two big fellows always remain in my memory with some soreness, for in neither case should they have escaped had I possessed an efficient companion on those particular days. I was fishing for sea-trout one cold March day on the lower reaches of the Beauly River, as the guest of Major

Cameron, using a trout rod and a small "March brown." I had landed a few "Whitling," when a large salmon made a beautiful head and tail rise at my fly. He missed it, and I gave him ten minutes and got over him again. This time he came boldly, and I had him well hooked. He did not fight with any special vigour, and after an hour and a half of careful handling I had him fairly well done, and saw that he was a bright and beautiful fish of exceptional size for the northern river, and must have weighed about 35 lbs. at least. Fraser, the fisherman, at last got the net under him, and we stood regarding our captive lolloping on the shore. Major Cameron said he was a "clean" fish. To me he certainly looked all right, but Fraser was doubtful, and without uttering another word threw him back in the river. I was naturally more than a little disappointed when an hour later he said, "Well, I think I made a mistake. I believe he was clean after all." What more was there to be said?

On some of these northern rivers, notably the Spey in early spring, it is most difficult to tell a well-mended kelt from a fresh-run fish. Both are clean and silvery, play quite well and are indistinguishable to any but the expert. I remember once at Craigellachie on the opening day of the season catching no fewer than eleven so-called kelts and finally one clean fish, but though the fisherman explained to me the difference, for the life of me I could not see it.

Another big fish that gave me some heartburnings was one I hooked one autumn day on the Kilbary water. This beat is situated next to the famous Carysville fishing on the Blackwater in Ireland.

A brother officer, Captain Barlow, and I had taken it for the season, and had had very good sport —getting a fish or two every day in September. On the last day of the season I hooked a monster and had him on for an hour. At length I got him into a still pool close to the bank, where he had just sufficient strength left to give one or two final rolls. Sweeny, our fisherman, and a proper rascal, would not wet his feet, and was under any circumstances an arrant bungler with the gaff. I had brought the exhausted fish past him at least four times when he ought to have gaffed it. Once more I essayed the same manœuvre, when suddenly away came the hook. Even then the fish, one of at least 40 lbs., lay exhausted on the surface, and a clever gillie would have had time to dash in and get him. Not so Sweeny, who just stared until the salmon righted itself and disappeared.

In the following spring Captain Barlow and I again took Kilbary, and noted plenty of fish in the river, but on the two opening days we never had a rise. I had noticed, however, certain heavily indented marks at the casting places, and as these seemed to coincide with the form of Sweeny's boot, which was of remarkable size, I suspected some dirty work. Accordingly my friend and I drove to the river, which we could approach without being seen, on the third day, having told Sweeny that we should be unable to come on that morning. It was a cold morning in February, but we had not long to wait before our dishonest keeper emerged from his cottage, brought out his rod, and going to the head of the best pool, commenced fishing. We administered some stern threats to the poacher,

with the result that he did not fish again that season, and we did well during the following days. But habit is too strong in the typical Irishman. Sweeny was cunning, and knew how we had caught him, so next year he only poached from his boat, moored at intervals on the stream. But a day of retribution was at hand. One morning, having taken a little too much whisky, he tried casting from his cranky craft, and so toppled out of the boat and was drowned.

Looking back on all those pleasant days on the Tay and other rivers, I can only recall one other incident that is worth recording, but as it involved a struggle such as I believe has fallen to no other angler on the Tay, or perhaps even in Scotland, I may be pardoned giving the adventure in full.

In the autumn of 1891 I was doing duty at the depot of my regiment, the Seaforth Highlanders, at Fort George. Amongst my good comrades there was a certain Captain (now General) Stockwell, who had more than once expressed to me a burning desire to kill a salmon. I promised him that his wish should be realised provided he was able to throw a line out for a distance of ten or fifteen yards. Then I waited to hear from Murthly that the river was in condition and full of fish. The expected news came at last on October 5th, and we took the first train for Dunkeld. Next day, as there were other guests in the house, we drove to the lowest beat of all—a stretch of river embracing the slow-moving water below Caputh Bridge and Burn Bend stream, and at once got to work. My friend was given the boat with the two keepers, Haggart and Conacher, whilst I went a few hundred yards lower

down on the east bank, taking Keay, the head keeper, to gaff for me.

This smooth water below Caputh Bridge had never been fished before, as it was very rarely in "ply," but on this particular day it seemed to be full of fish, which were leaping in every direction. Moreover, the water was just in that perfect condition for salmon-fishing which is, unfortunately, not too common—namely, slightly clear and *falling* after a big spate. It was one of those days when you had simply to make a cast and up they came. I had hardly commenced when I was "in" to a good fish, and had the satisfaction of seeing my friend similarly engaged and evidently somewhat confused with the multitudinous advice being thrust upon him by the more experienced boatmen. At one o'clock we met for lunch, and I had killed three good fish, whilst Captain Stockwell also had three and had lost four others. He was, however, very happy, and said he had never had such a day in his life. After a hurried meal I thought it better to allow Captain Stockwell to work the same water again, as Burn Bend was only a short stream and in big water difficult to manage a boat. So Keay and I crossed the river and went to the top of the new water.

To understand subsequent events I must say a few words of Burn Bend and its natural features. The upper part of the stream is rapid, and this gradually falls away into a smooth, boiling "flat," which extends to the Meiklow boundary about half a mile below. On the east side is the large stony beach of Delvine and on the west is a high bank, all open and easy to cast from for about

one hundred and fifty yards, when high woods with deep water below cut the angler off from further work on shore. Therefore from the Murthly side the fishing area is short, and a salmon hooked there must either be killed within its limit or a boat procured and the fish followed on the Delvine side until it is exhausted.

I commenced fishing at the head of the stream, and at the second cast was "in" to what appeared to be a big fish. The river here being narrow and my reel having plenty of line (one hundred and twenty yards), I easily controlled the movements of my quarry for some ten minutes, and then he commenced to "bore" down-stream in a disconcerting manner. He was so strong I could not check him, till at last, when within thirty yards of the wood at the end of the bank, I told Keay to run up-stream as quickly as possible and fetch the boat.

"A'll no gang unless ye promise no to gang in the river," remarked the cautious Keay.

"All right," I replied hurriedly, "but for Heaven's sake run!"

The old keeper disappeared in a twinkling, and I heard him shouting for my friends, who were some seven hundred yards away. Meanwhile the salmon continued to bore down-stream, taking out every moment more and more line, and forcing me step by step towards the wood. Once its great tail showed, and feeling sure I had hold of a fish of the first quality, I resolved to follow him somehow if the cast would only stand the strain. I do not know how long a time actually elapsed before I found myself hanging on like grim death to the great tree-roots with one hand, whilst with the

other I grasped the rod, bent nearly double, and practically all the line gone. I was up to my neck in the river, and had even made some way down the river by quickly shifting my right hand from root to root. The trees were thickly laced overhead, and my rod was on a level with the water to keep my movements free, but the terrific strain on the line was almost over. It could not have lasted another minute, when I heard a sound behind me, and looking up, saw Haggart and Captain Stockwell with outstretched hands waiting to catch me as the boat swept down. In another moment, dripping but triumphant, I found myself on the floor of the boat with the rod still bent double in my left hand, and, best of all, the fish still "on."

"Put me on the Delvine bank and I'll soon kill him now," I said, for I felt that if ever a salmon was well hooked that one was. A few sharp strokes and we were there, and as I jumped ashore the fish, now scared, made off on the longest run I have ever seen a salmon make. He went off at full speed too, and I ran along the shingle for at least four hundred yards without a single halt. This was something like salmon fishing, and I fondly imagined that such a run would exhaust him, and the rest would be easy. Not a bit of it. The boat came up ready to be of assistance, and the men were in time to take a rest whilst the fish sulked for a few minutes, then off he went again at a full run for another five or six hundred yards before halting. We were now close to the end of the Delvine beach, and as I did not wish to be caught napping again with trees or obstacles to block the passage, I got into the boat and crossed to the west bank on Meiklour,

where the country was open. Here, too, was a small semi-backwater, and I thought that if I could force the fish into this calm area he would no longer have the dead weight of the stream to help him. An attempt at such methods, however, only seemed to arouse the devil in this extraordinary fish, and again he took fright, and so the men had to pull at full speed to keep on terms with him at all. In the last three big runs he had taken us fully a mile and a half below the spot where I had hooked him, and in the stream itself he did just what he liked, setting the pace and direction.

"Mechty me, he gaen to tak us ower the Linn o' Campsie," ejaculated the nervous Jimmy.

"Na, na," said the phlegmatic Haggart. "We'll hae him before he's doon tae Stobhall."

But pull him out of the stream I could not without the risk of a break, and so the hours went by, and more and more slowly we continued our descent of the river, till we reached the bottom of the Meiklour water, and evening came on.

Here at last I got some force to bear on my gallant opponent, and letting him go into the stream, we rushed the boat till nearly level with the fish, and then, applying force, swung him *nolens-volens* into a big, slow-moving side-swirl. He tried to regain the current, but I just managed to head him back. Again and again he sought the centre of the river, and each time his runs became less frequent and with less power. Even then he remained in this pool for over an hour and a half, until after one final spurt the top of the rod did its work, and up to the surface came a great tail. A groan escaped us all, for we knew then the reason

of all our trouble. He was foul hooked. In a few moments Keay had the gaff into him, and we stood in the semi-darkness surveying a thirty-four-pounder that filled us all with hopeless disappointment. The hook was firmly buried in the skin of the shoulder of the left fore-fin, and under such circumstances it was really a wonder I had killed him at all. If he had escaped I feel sure I should have imagined I had lost a sixty-pounder. At any rate he had nearly killed me. I was shivering with cold and quite exhausted, for I had fought, with the salmon continuously running, sulking, and boring, from a quarter to two till a quarter to eight, and such work, even to a young man in the prime of life, is a pretty severe physical strain. Anyway, I shall never forget what dear old Jimmy always referred to afterwards as " the wild fush."

## CHAPTER VIII

### ONE AFRICAN DAY

On the evening of October 16th, 1913, we reached the Amala [1] River after a long trek of sixteen miles across the open Lemik plain, where we saw a few Wildebeest, Topi, Thomson's Gazelle and Grant's Gazelle. Since October 6th, when we left Kijabe on the Uganda railway, we had been going hard, mostly over a waterless and somewhat gameless country, except in the Kedong and when we had crossed the Loita plains, where Thomson's and Grant's Gazelle and Ostrich were very abundant. We had not stopped to hunt, but on the way my friend H. Pullar had killed a couple of splendid Grants in the Kedong, one a beauty almost twenty-nine inches, and I had shot a couple of good Thomson's Gazelle and an Abyssinian Duiker. Crossing the high Mau escarpment, I had suffered considerable pain in the walls of my right lung—the result of an old trouble in Alaska—and feared that I was in for a bad time, but as we descended to the Amala and the warmer region of the Victoria Nyanza these symptoms disappeared, and I was soon in the best of health, and able to enjoy the hunting. H. Pullar's hunter, William Judd, one of the most charming of men and best of hunters,

[1] Sometimes called the Mara.

had told us that we should see game in quantity once we reached the Amala, since hunting parties seldom went there, it being too far to reach without the aid of wagons, which we possessed. Accordingly it was with high hopes that we left Judd's trading store on the river and trekked south through park-like forest country on the morning of October 17th. As we advanced, Pullar and I, riding in front, saw troops of Zebras, Topi, Pallah, Wildebeest and other game in increasing quantity, and by the time we had reached our first hunting-camp in the late afternoon, we experienced the joy of having at last met the Great Game in East Africa, and seen it in such abundance as we had been led to hope. On the way one Pallah with an exceptional head tempted me to try a long shot, but he only stood for a moment between two trees at about 250 yards, and I missed him.

It is one of the charms of East African hunting that when you have arrived in camp and possess so excellent a camp manager as Judd you have nothing to do but just to hunt and enjoy yourself. Some men object to the so-called " white " hunter, who, except in the case of the complete novice, does little actual hunting, but when the arrangements of the safari are in the hands of such a thoroughly experienced man, the hunter is relieved of all camp worries and arrangements, and can come and go at will. Personally I prefer to hunt alone, with one black follower, so after a hasty meal, as there were yet two or three hours of daylight, I wandered in to the bush, accompanied by my gun-bearer, Mabruki, a silent and keen-eyed Wakamba savage, who in his youth had been a

Two Wood Ibisses, Amala River

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TWO ANGRY LIONESSES, AMALA RIVER, OCTOBER 16TH, 1913.

cannibal. As we left the camp, situated about 200 yards from the river, we immediately encountered a great herd of Thomson's Gazelle, numbering at least two hundred. There were some good heads amongst them, far better than are ever seen in the northern plains, but as I passed them slowly in review they drifted with little runs to either side. I made for a high ant-hill close by, from which I could secure a view of the game in front. What a wonderful sight it was! We have often read of the marvellous assemblage of animals in the Free State plains once seen by the hunter, but now gone, and some people seem to think that all that was best has vanished for ever. But that is not the case. Could some pessimists have seen, as we did during the next month, the great herds of game found between the Amala River and the old German border, they would have had cause to alter their dismal views. Here was Africa untouched, and still as prolific in wild life as it was a hundred years ago. Man the destroyer had not yet made his mark. There were no natives, except a few wandering Masai, who never touched the game, and perhaps only once a year some wandering hunter came for a month or two and shot a few heads. It was just Africa, as we who love the wilds and its game had wished to see it. Everything was as we had hoped, and for once our dreams came true.

One day, some weeks later, when on trek, Pullar, Judd and I sat on the slope of some lovely hills near the old German border and looked over the exquisite landscape of hill and plain, now fresh and green from recent showers.

Wherever we looked there was game—game in herds, battalions and individuals, stretching away in thousands over to the billowing uplands. One herd of five hundred Zebra were at the moment emerging from the open forest on our left, and the whole country seemed to be moving with animals attracted by the succulent pasture.

"Did you ever see more game, Judd?" I asked.

"Well," he replied, "I have often seen as much down here, but never more."

"Let us count for a bit," I suggested, and we each took an area for a different front, with the result that in half an hour our total was nine thousand head.[1]

But let us return to my ant-heap, where I sat entranced for an hour, enjoying for the first time in life Africa's Wonderland of Game. About 200 yards away were a small herd of Coke's Hartebeest, here somewhat uncommon. To the right were no fewer than three large herds of Pallah, one of which numbered over a hundred animals, feeding along the edge of the bush that fringed the denser forest towards the river. To the south, as far as the thorn-trees that blocked the horizon line, were hundreds of Topi, glistening now brown, now purple in the evening sun. In the centre stood an old Waterbuck bull, and on the left were three large herds of White-bearded Gnu, flanked by numerous Thomson's Gazelle and scattered Zebras. It was

[1] This, it must be remembered, was purely the amount of game actually under view. There must have been many hundreds hidden under shoulders of the ground and lying scattered in the open bush.

lovely just to sit and watch all these delightful creatures, so quiet and undisturbed that it was evident we were far from the ken of civilisation.

There was yet a good hour of daylight, so I mounted my old horse "Kongoni" and went south, and then circled back towards camp as the sun came near the horizon. As we proceeded quietly, the game seemed in no way alarmed. They just stopped feeding and moved slowly aside for a hundred yards or so, and then settled again. I saw nothing to tempt me to fire a shot until near the camp, when a big herd of Wildebeest galloped past and then stopped. The master bull seemed a good one, so I resolved to try him, although he was a fairly long shot—250 yards. I heard the bullet tell loudly on his side, and he ran some twenty yards, wheeled round in the cloud of dust once or twice and fell dead. This was fortunate, as I hoped to find a lion at the carcase at daybreak.

On arriving within a few hundred yards of camp again I encountered the big herd of Thomson's Gazelle usually found on the flat above the river. The light was going fast, but there was enough to see a wonderful male with a head such as I had never seen before. I tried hard to get a shot at him, but presently he got amongst the mass of animals standing against the dark bush, when I completely failed to see him. I marked him for next morning, but never saw him again.[1]

Arrived in camp, I handed over my Wildebeest

[1] There is little doubt that this was the same animal Baron de Rothschild shot about six months later. The horns measured 16⅞ inches, which is the record for Thomson's Gazelle.

head to our skinner, "Lord Delamere," [1] and found that Pullar, who had been out with Judd, had killed some Wildebeest as bait for lions, which we hoped to find at the carcases next morning. After an excellent dinner served by our "chef," Mahomed, a real artist of the frying-pan, we smoked our pipes to the pleasant rumblings [2] of three different troops of lions and the weird cries of birds and game, and felt we had come at last to the best place in East Africa.

In preparation for an early start next morning we soon dived under the mosquito curtains and went to bed. Somehow I could not sleep, and lay for long listening to the continuous snarls and grunts of the lions, which had evidently found the dead Wildebeest near the camp. Now and again the night air was rent by the agonised yells of the hyænas, who were being kept off their dinner by the feeding lions, and these cries continued the whole night long, till I sank into a troubled sleep, shortly before the dawn. It was still dark when my Uganda boy, bringing hot water, gently touched me and announced the hour as a quarter to five. Not a sound was to be heard

[1] I never knew what his real name was, but he always called himself "Lord Delamere," and was very particular about the "Lord." I fancy that at some time he had been with the real owner of this name, and like many other natives had adopted the title of his former master (a common occurrence amongst East African natives who wish to perpetuate the nomenclature of some one they admire).

[2] Lions seldom roar well in East Africa, as I used to hear them in South Africa. Only twice during this trip did I hear a lion "let himself go" in that magnificent thunder which is the grandest of all earthly sounds. Once I heard a lion roar loudly at 10 a.m. and ran at top speed to try and cut him off; but he got into the bush and I lost him.

as we stood and drank our coffee in the darkness. An hour passed ere it was light enough to see an object at 100 yards, and then Pullar, Judd and I loaded our rifles and crept silently out towards the palm-trees from which we hoped to view the carcases of the Wildebeest and find the lions still on feed. Over the last fifty yards we crawled in complete silence, and then, looking through a low bastion of stunted bushes, surveyed the scene. There was nothing there except a few disconsolate-looking vultures and two or three Marabout Storks pecking fitfully at the shank-bones of the vanished Wildebeests. The lions had finished their meal and gone.

Few people know how completely nocturnal lions have become in nearly all parts of Africa. It is now possible to live for years in some lion-haunted districts and yet never to see a single one in broad daylight. Only a few years ago on the Gwas N'gishu plateau or the Athi, for instance, lions could be seen almost any morning, returning over the open country to lie up in bush for the day. Nearly all these lions were ridden down and killed, and in other parts, especially in forest and bush countries, it is now very rare to see one in broad daylight, except in the very wildest and least-frequented places. Lions soon learn it is not safe to be abroad after sun up, and make for the dense bush by the rivers or lie up in dongas, where they are seldom surprised or seen, unless stumbled upon by chance.

Here on the Amala, certainly one of the best lion places in all Africa, a lion feeding late in the morning or coming home from some foray might

be viewed, but in spite of their abundance, it was just a chance, and though we hunted early and late during subsequent days close to the river, where their recent kills were scattered in all directions, we seldom saw them, and even then always in the vicinity of dense bush, to which they quickly retreated.

How wonderful is the African morning in the wilds, and the coming of day with all its manifold sights and sounds! This, indeed, is the place above all others in which it is good to be a naturalist and to appreciate the marvellous pageant of Nature as the dawn unfolds.

It is at this hour that the infinite variety of tropical life can be seen. From 5.30 to 9.30 there is a delicious atmosphere of coolness and activity, when birds and mammals are on the move to feed and travel, and though for the most part ever watchful, they are as yet not prone to hide themselves. If we are out very early we may see a Bushbuck with his wife creeping slowly along on feed at the very edge of the forest—a Ratel, a Mongoose, a Jackal or a Hyæna, night wanderers, generally speaking, trotting home to lie up for the day. There is a whole world of activity in the forest whilst we sleep, and if we could only have the power of sight at night what wonderful scenes could we record! It is only the tail-end of the habits of night dwellers we view, and then not always the most interesting ones.

If we except the purely night movers, whose cries extend often until the dawn, the first bird to raise his voice is the Bush Cuckoo, sometimes known as the "Water-bottle" bird, owing to his

mellifluous bubbling notes. The sound is one that gets into the African traveller's mind and remains with him long after he has left the land of sunshine. Another dawn sound is the flapping of Fischer's Bush Lark, as he mounts into the heavens in aerial display to charm his mate.

Then in the grey dawn wherever you go great ghost-like forms of large vultures pass and vanish amid the shadows, and in the Sotik country troops of the white Wood Ibis (*Pseudo-tantalus ibis*), with its curved orange bill and red face, float by on their way to search for food, whilst a rush of swiftly beaten pinions overhead reminds you of home, when the Teal or Mallard are in flight, though here it is the African Mallard (*Anas undulata*), Pintail, or Shoveller on the move. When more light comes, a common sound throughout the forest and river country is the loud chatter of a pair of Barbets as they meet and greet one another. It is like nothing but the noise made by an old cartwheel that wants greasing.

If one wished to collect or study birds in this wonderful region, the best way to see them, especially all the small species, is to select a single tree apart from the rest, and yet standing in the line of trees that fringe a water-course. All perching birds here seem to have a habit of following the course of a river or donga, and sooner or later they will come to you.

One morning I counted twenty-two different species of perching birds that alighted in the branches of a thorn-tree over my head, and though many of the species were unknown to me, I noticed Lesser Kestrel (*Cerchnois naumanni*), Malachite King-

fisher (*Corythornis cyanostigma*) passing by; Lilac-breasted Roller (*C. caudatus*); two species of Bee-eater; a flock of Colies (*Colius*); Touraco (*Turacus hartlaubi*); a small Woodpecker (probably *Thripias schoensis*); Flycatchers; two species of Shrike; Sun-birds, perhaps the most gorgeous of all the little birds of Africa, and Barbets. Out in the open, park-like forest from the Mau to the old German border, Hornbills, *Bycanistes buccinator*, *B. cristatus*, *L. melanoleucus*, and *Lophoceros fasciatus*, are very common, and their long, undulating flight is very noticeable. We often, too, heard the Great Ground Hornbill in the early morning, and I surprised a party of these great birds feeding out in a small "open" one morning. The long tail is very conspicuous in flight, and they are always very shy.

But perhaps the most lovely bird of the open country is the Lilac-breasted Roller (*Coracius caudatus*),[1] a wonderful harmony of exquisite colours, and when he falls to ground from a high tree to seize a beetle all the colours of the prism are displayed.

Another charming bird of the bush country is the Fork-tailed Drongo (*Dicrurus musicus*), one of the Wood-Shrikes who often bursts into a sweet little song as you come near. From the Kedong southwards through all the open country four species of Bustard were very common, especially the large Kori, which were seen in Kedong in hundreds in November. This Bustard often lies

[1] I noticed a big migration of these birds between Simba and Makindu in December. With them were a few of the Common Roller (*C. garrulus*).

down and takes a siesta at midday under a spreading thorn-tree, and one day on the Lemik I passed one within forty yards without its moving or showing any alarm. Lovat's Bustard (*Otis lovati*) was not uncommon on the high parts of the Mau, where I shot four one morning, as well as a species closely allied to the Vaal-Khorhan of South Africa. Another common bird of the Sotik forest country is the Olive or Spotted Wood-pigeon (*Columba arquatrix*), which often comes in great numbers to drink at some favourite pool at dawn or sunset. But it was by the river that we saw most of the birds, or in the woods and " opens " adjoining water. Here there are always numbers of spur-winged, Ruppell's or Crowned Plover, the latter a bird of the dry country and a noisy, obsequious fellow.

Herons are everywhere abundant along the river itself, and I noticed the great Goliath Heron (*Ardea goliath*) twice, whilst Purple, Black-headed, Buff-backed, Squacco and Night Herons were abundant.

Various kinds of Storks, too, are very numerous, including the beautiful great Jabiru and the ugly Marabou, as great a scavenger as the vulture himself, and the master of the feast after the lions and hyænas have gone. One day I saw what I believed to be a new species of Stork, grey in colour, and with a large bill like a Jabiru.

At another time I noticed a big migration of the Common Stork (*ciconia alba*), which came in hundreds over the Mau and settled in the open plain of the Kedong. Perhaps the loveliest birds I saw on the Amala were a pair of the gorgeous Violet Touracos, which came within a few yards of me one morning shortly after dawn, and made a most

exquisite courtship display close to my perch (I was up a tree waiting for lions). The sun just caught the marvellous colours on the shot-purple wings as they spread them to show their beauty. Elevating their crests they hopped round one another, uttering a low guttural call, and seemed to understand the effect that their brilliant plumage would create.[1]

More humble, but none the less welcome, was the advent one morning in November of one of our own little Willow Warblers from England. It sang a subdued little song, something like the one it utters just before leaving our shores in September, and seemed as if it had brought a message of love from home. As I watched it, I wondered if it had come from my garden in Sussex. Various species of African Swallows, too, were very common near the border to the south, especially the chestnut-bellied one with the long tail, and these, with the rare White-headed Swallow, I found breeding in the caverns of the cliffs in the hills to the south. Swifts, including our Swift and the Chinese Swift, were also noted in large numbers, flying high in the heavens, whilst I observed the nests of the Palm Swift in some fringed palms growing on the banks of the Amala, and watched the birds going in and out of their domed nests. Here, too, were also colonies of Weaver-birds, often hung over the water itself, whilst other species nested out in the open park-lands on stunted thorn-trees.

One of the strangest and most interesting birds

[1] Sir H. Johnston has a good illustration of this bird in his work on Uganda and East Africa.

of East Africa is Fischer's Bush-Lark (*Mirafra fischeri*), which is common both in the Kedong and the open country to the south of the southern Gwas N'yro.[1] In November it makes an interesting flight courtship, which I have often witnessed soon after dawn. The bird soars up into the air to 800 feet, and then makes two or three falls, and rises again before descending in headlong dive to the summit of a tree, much after the manner of our Tree-Pipit. During this flight the bird makes a curious rattling noise when on the upgrade, the sound being audible at a great distance.[2]

The day was just beginning, so I left Pullar and Judd to hunt along the river, which was the best chance for lions, and went south out into the park-like country to view the quantities of game I had seen the evening before, in the hope of getting a good head or two of some of the Antelopes. We all wish to get good specimens, and this looking for exceptional ones where game is abundant has in itself a great charm, for, as numbers are passed in review, it is wonderful how soon one can appreciate the additional inch or two of horn that constitutes the desirable trophy. Record heads are generally obtained by flukes, often without any special skill on the part of the hunter, and occur even to the experienced just once or twice in a lifetime, but when animals are really as abundant as they are here, it is necessary to be selective, and not shoot at any beast that just for the moment seems to carry good horns. There are hundreds

[1] I have also seen it in Mashonaland.

[2] A diagram of this flight is well figured in my friend Abel Chapman's *On Safari*, p. 888.

of most of the common kinds, and as we look them over with the glass, and at last see that one individual with an exceptional trophy, it is our object to kill him, even if it takes all day to do so. I rode on for some ten minutes, till the whole landscape in front seemed dotted with troops of Topi, Pallah, Wildebeest, Zebra and Thomson's Gazelle, whilst here and there could be seen a few Sing-Sing Waterbuck, and one small herd of Coke's Hartebeest and a few small Wart-hog. Topi were literally in hundreds, and mostly scattered or in small groups.

I saw nothing with an exceptional head, and was about to put away my glass, when at about 600 yards I noticed a large yellow beast standing in front of a dark bush. It seemed to carry no horns, so I put the glass on it. A thrill of excitement passed through me when I saw it was a big lioness. She seemed to be watching me closely, and as I lowered the glass and said "Simba" to Mabruki she trotted out of the bush, closely followed by two other lionesses as large as herself.

Luckily the lions made for the open park-lands, and not towards the river bush, which was close at hand, so I set old "Kongoni" on the move at a gentle canter, whilst Mabruki ran alongside me, at a good pace, with my second gun. My object was to cut off the lions in their advance and bring them to bay without, if possible, making them too much annoyed, and so get in a quiet shot. The leading lioness, however, became alarmed and dashed forward at a good gallop, leaving the two others trotting quietly in the rear. Soon she was 200 yards ahead of the others, and disappeared in a dry water-

course covered with stunted thorn-trees, but as I made a spurt between this place and the two lionesses following, they suddenly threw up their heads and stood looking at me, at the same time uttering two or three angry grunts of disapproval.

My old horse "Kongoni," though a good enough animal for hunting, had no turn of speed, and if chased by a lion would most certainly have been caught, so I determined to see the rest of the fight out on foot. Wherefore I jumped off and ran forward till within 250 yards of the lions, whose demonstrations now became so alarming that I saw the moment for action had arrived.

Most unfortunately, the ground was covered with longish grass and stunted bush where I could neither sit nor lie down, so was obliged to take my shot from the shoulder, always a bad position for a long shot. Sighting carefully, I saw the bullet strike an ant-heap about 200 yards beyond the lioness, but in a good line, perhaps two or three inches too high. The beast I fired at stood perfectly still, but the second lioness now lay down and began switching her tail, afterwards uttering a loud roar. I fired again, and this time hit the lioness in the centre of the shoulder. She raised her foreleg and bit it fiercely, and then ran about thirty yards, swung round once or twice and fell.

At this moment I heard the sounds of galloping behind me, and knew that Pullar and Judd were coming up at full speed. Glancing towards the second lioness, I now saw she had charged up within 100 yards of me, and was lying flat out on the ground, switching her tail from side to side and uttering low growls. I covered her with my

sight, but as she was apparently more excited by the advent of the galloping horses, and was looking towards them, I thought I would risk her charge and allow Pullar to have the shot, since, more than once, he had expressed his wish to kill a lion.

I kept my sight on her chest, however, and must confess that the moment when Pullar to my right jumped off his horse and got into position was a very anxious one. Every moment I thought she would charge, when at last bang went the powerful ·416 Rigby, and the lioness seemed to be bodily lifted from the ground and placed *hors de combat*. I breathed a sigh of relief, but although done for, she still showed fight—the shot was rather low, but had raked her through the stomach. Yet the gallant beast still came on. Pullar's second shot missed, and the third laid her out, apparently dead, whilst the fourth caused instantaneous death. In the excitement of the moment both my friend and Judd had a shot at my lioness, which did not seem to require it. I need not describe the joy with which we surveyed our prizes—two full-grown lionesses in the prime of life. Apparently Pullar and Judd had also seen the lions, and came at full speed before they heard my shots, being unaware of my presence until I fired, but it was splendid that Pullar should have arrived in time to get his first lion. Indeed, it was a great day for him, as shall be detailed later.

I was very pleased with Mabruki and Simba Maten, my second gun-bearer, who had stuck close to me in attacking the lions, and neither of these men betrayed the smallest symptom of fear when it came to action. Mabruki stood like a rock, with

my second rifle pressed against my right leg and ready for immediate use in case of trouble, and only his eyes glistened with the scent of battle. He had the best eyesight of any man I ever hunted with, and was about the worst hand on a spoor—even a heavy blood spoor—that could be imagined. In fact, in two cases when I had wounded and lost two animals—both Pallah rams—he was perfectly hopeless, and I had to make out the trail myself, in both cases fortunately with success. This deficiency in the power of tracking seems to be a common characteristic of all the East African natives, and though they are generally keen, brave, long-sighted, enduring and devoted to their masters —if they think they can shoot—their powers of following wounded game are of the feeblest description. Of East African tribes only the N'dorobo seem to be the real hunters, and these are not always easy to get.

When we had skinned the lions we all returned to camp, where news of our success had already arrived. On the way Pullar killed a very good male Thomson's Gazelle with fine horns. Then took place the usual procession and dance, with branch-waving and blowing on oryx horns, in which all the porters joined and sang our praises—an exhibition of enthusiasm all the more popular because it entailed a certain amount of additional "backsheesh" and "posho." After an excellent dinner I found Mabruki boiling the eyes of my lioness, which he subsequently ate. In spite of his excellent powers of vision, he said that he felt assured "he would now see better."

We were just leaving for the afternoon hunt

when a herd of Topi came within 200 yards of the camp, and I dropped a good bull with seventeen-inch horns almost from the tent door. Then I saw a Zebra just in the right place to drop a "kill," and hit him rather low with a long shot. He took me some little distance from camp and then stood under a thorn-tree. By making a circuit I got within 150 yards, and lay down to give him a finishing shot, when I felt suddenly as if a pair of pincers had nipped me in the chest. Almost immediately I was on my feet, tearing at my shirt, for twenty devils of some sort were biting me all over. I had lain down amongst a swarm of the big black driver ants. I do not know when I have been so sore as I was during the next five minutes, when I had removed all my clothes except boots and puttees to rid myself of the enemy. These ferocious insects, four times the size of our ants, bite so fiercely and with such strength as must be realised to be appreciated. So intense is their attack that as you pull their bodies off their heads and nippers remain embedded in the flesh, and the skin is sore for a day or two afterwards.

The Zebra meanwhile had moved on another few hundred yards ere I resumed my clothes, and then after another stalk (this time I looked carefully at the ground before I lay down) I gave him a shoulder shot that finished him.

Moving to the south, I passed an old Masai kraal recently deserted by those nomads, and shortly afterwards met a Masai warrior stalking along with his long spear, followed by two women bearing heavy loads, and three donkeys even more heavily laden. The man returned my salutation, but passed

on with a certain dignity, as is the way with these proud folk, who care nothing for intercourse with the white race (and with good reason) unless forced to acknowledge them, or anxious to obtain help in sickness.[1]

Once the greatest warriors, and formidable as the Zulus themselves in organisation, the Masai are now a simple pastoral people, living on the produce of their flocks and herds. They do not kill game, and are, in consequence, ideal settlers in the game reserves, for game to them is of no account as food. The buffalo is of interest to them, as it is from these fierce animals they make their shields, and occasionally they kill a giraffe for the tail-hairs, which they use for sewing the ornamental pattern on their gourds and dresses.

Even lions are not molested by them, unless individuals take to cattle-killing, and then the young warriors band together and hunt up the lion, finishing it with spears alone. In these encounters many of the Masai are killed or injured, but this circumstance is of little matter to them, and far inferior in importance to the loss of a cow or donkey. It is curious to note that injuries from lions soon heal up in their case, for they seldom suffer from blood-poisoning or gangrene, so common in Europeans.

Every warrior's ambition seems to be to obtain the head and shoulder mane of a lion to use as a head-dress, and from the number of these to be

[1] At times several miserable Masai suffering from various diseases came in our camp and asked for treatment, but as a rule they took no notice of us, even when we passed their kraals.

seen the Masai must in the course of time kill a very large number of lions. Being so absolutely indifferent to the game, the Masai leave any country exactly as they found it, except for the fact that the grass is all eaten off by their cattle, and so they wander about from place to place according to season or the presence of rains, but are always careful never to stand too close to the "fly." Where no Masai are to be found, it is well to be careful, for the "fly" is near. We had to advance carefully near the old border-line, and eventually were forced to leave our cattle and wagons and go into the forest zone with porters only.

The organisation of the Masai people under their paramount chief, the Lunana, is excellent, and all the various tribes and clans obey him. Some of the petty chiefs possess as many as five to ten thousand head of cattle, and cannot be induced to sell one. They go on accumulating, till some great scourge like the Rinderpest of 1892–1896 occurs and sweeps 90 per cent. away, and then they start again. Many white men envy their grazing grounds and wealth of cattle, and would like to see them swept away or relegated to the desert lands, but this is grossly unfair, especially so in view of the fact that they behaved exceedingly well in the old days, when East Africa was the caravan route to Uganda. Then they could, if they had wished it, have given us an infinity of trouble.

One of the best and fairest of Governors who have ruled in British East Africa was Sir Donald Stewart, and he evolved the scheme of placing this nation in what were called the "Masai Reserves." These areas were given unreservedly to the Masai *for all*

*time*, with the right to wander and graze their herds. No other natives nor white men were allowed to settle there. These districts, coincidental with the Northern and Southern Game Reserves, were well placed, as well as being of great extent, and as they contain nearly the whole of the various species of game of East Africa, it was a plan that made a happy adjustment from more than one point of view. But the arrangements and so-called irrefutable promises of one Government are always fragile things, and liable to be upset by another, and so to-day we have seen the Likipia and other northern lands, once given by the British Government to the Masai "for all time," already taken from them and handed over to the settlers. It is, therefore, only a matter of time when further areas suitable to white settlement will be taken away, and the Masai driven into the "back o' beyond."

To-day the Southern Game Reserve, practically stretching from the line to the old German border, *i. e.* from Kilimanjaro to the forest country beyond Kissi, where "fly" begins, is the great Masai Reserve, and supports some thousands of Masai with their flocks and herds, and there are only one or two white settlers in the Kedong, with a trading store on the Amala and one on the Narossara (Van der Weyer's).

In the western portions game is as plentiful as in the reserve itself, and safaris are allowed to go and hunt, but few, except those possessed of wagons like ourselves, ever go beyond the Loita plains, where the mass of game begins, owing to the difficulties of food and transport.

Here the Masai live in their little cow-dung-

covered huts surrounding the kraals in which the cattle sleep at night. Their food consists of blood and milk, with an occasional sheep or sickly ox killed by the young El-Moran on special occasions.[1]

Their low huts are snug and warm, and are entered by a small, low door near the ground, the window being about two inches wide. Inside they are absolutely dark on the brightest day, and usually full of smoke from a stick-and-cow-dung fire. As the Arctic tribes live almost exclusively on the reindeer, so the Masai live on the products of their animals, and the wealth of a man is coincidental with the number of his herds. Money means nothing to them, and their only purchases from other tribes are brass and iron wire, iron for their spears, and tobacco-snuff.

In times of drought and disease, some of the Masai are forced into the forest to join the ranks of the Ogeig or N'dorobo, who are purely hunters of the forest. The language of the last-named tribe is somewhat similar to that of the Masai, so they are supposed to have had a common origin, although this is quite uncertain. At any rate they are a handsome non-Bantu race, and may at some remote date have come from the north.

If there is one animal that is characteristic of the Amala River and its environs it is the Pallah. From here to the old German border it is very abundant, and herds of two hundred were often seen. Moreover, in this part of Africa it grows, I think, to a larger size than in any other district in the continent. At any rate the average of the horns of males is very large, and I secured some splendid specimens

[1] I noticed that the women were allowed to eat the offal and remains after the young bucks had finished their meal.

of 27, 27½, 28½, 28½, and 30¼ inches, whilst Judd shot a magnificent specimen of 31½ inches, practically equalling the record. Pallah are amongst the most interesting and beautiful of all the African antelopes. They are always just sufficiently wild to make good stalking necessary, and when one good ram is mixed up with fifty or a hundred females and small beasts it is not always easy to secure him, especially if the first shot (always the best) is missed. The herd then becomes "kittle" and restive, starting into little leaps and runs whenever the hunter gets within 200 yards and tries another shot. Sometimes the herd must be followed for hours without a chance being given, and then patience is sometimes rewarded and another chance results in a kill. Even when but slightly alarmed Pallah have a very retentive memory, and though apparently "settled" and suitable for a fresh stalk, the hunter is often nonplussed by sudden movements of a single beast (generally an old female), who gets all the rest on the move by some sudden paroxysm of fear. This one alarmist has often a very sure idea of judging distance, setting the figure of danger at about 250 yards, so that whilst it is quite easy to walk openly to within this range, any further advance will start the one beast with a good memory, and then there is a rush, the whole herd leaping gracefully in the air over the backs of others. At such times it is well to sit beneath a tree for an hour and allow the herd to settle, although keeping them within view, and then start on a fresh stalk.

This evening I found a very large herd near the river about a mile from camp, and noticed that it contained one fine male with a good wide head.

By obtaining the cover of some low thorn-trees, I got within 200 yards, and hit him rather too low. Unfortunately he kept with the herd, and led me a long chase before he finally left it and lay down, when, after giving him half an hour, I made a fresh stalk, and killed him at 100 yards when he stood up. He had a nice head of 27 inches, but, being very wide, I was somewhat deceived in the matter of length.

After sending the head home I mounted "Kongoni" and went south for a few miles, seeing a great quantity of game, including two good Sing-Sing Waterbuck. One of these seemed to carry a good head, but was rather shy, having caught a glimpse of me in the preliminary stalk. However, after moving away to some distance, the best male entered some thin acacia forest, and I was able to advance quickly and catch a sight of him as he walked slowly away at about 200 yards. I then gave a loud whistle, and he turned round at gaze, with his gallant head held high. At such a time the Sing-Sing bull looks very fine, and bears himself with more dignity than most of the antelopes. His glance was fleeting, so I put the sight upon him at once and let go. He fell to the shot, but recovered and ran some fifty yards before coming to the earth in a cloud of dust. He was a fine specimen with 28½-inch horns, but not as good as one I killed a few days later with horns of 30⅛ inches—an unusual length for East Africa.[1]

[1] At this camp I also shot a good specimen of the common Waterbuck (*C. elipsiprimnus*), a rare animal in this district, and seldom found south of the Uganda Railway in this part of Africa.

I then stalked a Wart-hog boar, who was rooting in the open park-lands, and whose tusks I could not see, until a close inspection showed them to be old and worn down. The wind was good, so I got within forty yards of my quarry before he heard me, erected his tail and dashed off in a cloud of dust. One Grant's Gazelle, a rare animal on the Amala, was also seen, but its horns were poor, thin and wide and of the Lemik plain type, much inferior to the splendid specimens found in the Kodong. Topi and Zebra were in hundreds in every direction, and near the river, where the lions usually killed at night, were the remains of many victims being pecked at by numerous vultures and Marabout Storks.

I wandered for an hour amidst a large belt of trees that fringed the river, which was covered with longish grass, but otherwise open, and put up three pairs of Ward's Reedbuck. At one of these, as it had a good head, I tried to obtain a shot, but, contrary to the usual experience, it was very wild, and dashed off with a loud whistle, and never halted till it plunged in some dense bush beside the river, where I could not follow it.

Then, as the evening was coming on, I made a wide circuit over the park-lands, turning towards camp as the sun neared the horizon. Here I encountered some low, stony hills where Oribi were very numerous.

These little antelopes always live together in pairs, and dash away for some fifty yards before rising perpendicularly on their hind-legs—a curious habit. In works of Natural History and sport dealing with African game I do not see it stated

that the female is *invariably larger than the male*, but this is the case, and as the horns are difficult to see unless the buck is on the sky-line, or outlined against light grass, the hunter can easily make the mistake of killing the female instead of the male. I did this with the first pair I ever encountered, but on future occasions always used the glass before shooting. To-day I did not fire at one, as no exceptional head was seen, but passed on homewards until I encountered another herd of Pallah about half a mile from camp.

There was no one in camp when I arrived there, and as there was yet an hour before sunset, I took a stroll by myself up the river towards the spot where I had seen the big wide Pallah two days ago. Here I encountered three small herds, which each contained fine rams, but nothing exceptional, so I circled homewards again, and had come within 600 yards of the camp when a herd of White-bearded Gnus galloped past me and stood at about 150 yards. The master bull was a good one, so I gave him a heart shot which caused immediate collapse. By the time I had offskinned the head and neck it was nearly dark, so I made homewards, to find Pullar and Judd all smiles, standing over the skin of a fine male lion the former had just killed.

Pullar's own account of the evening's hunt is as follows—

"In the afternoon Judd and I mounted and went towards the river for Waterbuck. I missed a good Impalla by shooting over it, and with one leap as high as a tent it bounded off into the bush. Emerg-

ing carefully from dense jungle, Judd noticed a herd of Waterbuck grazing, and to ascertain whether there was a bull with good horns amongst them, he whistled loudly several times to make them put up their heads. As they were all females we went on, and soon noticed a fine Waterbuck, but in a very unapproachable position in open ground 600 yards off down-wind.

"We decided that Judd and the gun-bearers should halt where they were, and I stalked forward about 200 yards through the grass, till I could see the bull grazing about 200 yards off. I heard whistling behind, but thinking that Judd was again trying to get the beast to raise his head, I went on, and eventually fired a shot, which missed. On looking back, as I should probably have done earlier, I noticed Judd and the gun-bearers hastening forward on my left and beckoning me to come.

"It seems that a lion and five lionesses had come out of the bush and were also stalking my buck, but from the east.

"On hearing my shot they returned leisurely to the bush, and we were disappointed to think that a good chance at lion had been lost, but I was pretty hot and blown, and told Judd that I could probably not have hit the lion anyhow.

"After a few minutes' rest we went forward, and had just decided to stalk a Reedbuck, which was, as Judd said, 'coming from the sublime to the ridiculous,' when we again saw the lion alone, about 220 yards off, and facing our way. He was swinging his tail up over his back, as if rather annoyed at being interrupted in his stalk.

"I had plenty of time to get into a comfortable

position on an ant-heap, and we waited till he should advance within closer range. However, he lay down in the long yellow grass, and we could see him yawn with great open jaws in a bored manner. Then he got up and turned as if to go back to the jungle, so I had to take the shot at once. I fired at his shoulder, and by great good luck knocked him over at 208 yards.

"He rose, turned about, and came on only a few yards when I hit him again with the ·416 expanding bullet, and to my joy I saw he was done for.

"As a precaution Judd fired two shots into the bush in case the females thought of coming at us, for it is a well-known fact that the lioness frequently charges when the lion is down, although he does not do so for a lioness!

"It was quite exciting work, as the lion was half lying with his forepart up and only a few yards from the edge of the bush. At 100 yards I hit him again, and finally, to avoid damaging the skin, gave him a finishing shot in the neck at fifteen yards with the light rifle.

"It is quite an impressive sight to see the 'King of Beasts' breathe his last, and much more satisfactory to kill him in the open than from behind a fence or with lamps at night. This lion turned out to be a fully-grown young beast, but smaller than the lioness killed this morning, and practically maneless, as is usual in bush.

"Of carnivorous animals that I have seen skinned this lion had the most repulsive smell—quite different from the antelopes.

"Now that I have succeeded in getting a lion and a lioness, I am not very keen to kill more—

except a really large and heavily-maned lion if the chance occurs. Altogether it was a lucky day for us in getting two lionesses in the morning and a lion in the afternoon. The headman and porters in camp again celebrated the occasion, and one native, with his face painted white, danced about brandishing a club to represent the powers of the white man! The latter would, as far as I am concerned, rather tackle a lion with a hard-hitting modern rifle than with a club or spear!"

Thus ended a day of great success, and one that will live in the memory.

As we sat at night over the camp fire and heard the lions rumbling in all directions, it seemed as if we had for the moment reached the acme of human enjoyment. Just to be in Africa's Wonderland—and in the very best of it—free from all the cares and worries of human civilisation, with the power to roam at will into the great lands beyond where no man passes, was in itself, to lovers of the wilderness, an experience many strive for and few experience. When we add to this the delights of big-game hunting—surely the finest sport in the world—in a land that is still quite unspoilt, and where anything may turn up from an Elephant to a Dik-dik, life could hold nothing better, for it is the man's life above all others which nothing in existence could surpass.

"My brain likes London," once remarked a lady to me, "but my body prefers the country." That exhibits a certain wisdom which all healthy and intelligent people understand. To enjoy our little day here on earth there should be a happy com-

bination of practice for the intellect as well as exercise for the body, and when we can devote to each its due measure of evolution, neither the brain nor our physical powers will rust, for to experience the pleasures of the chase and the beauties of Nature, a certain time must be spent in mental work and conversation with bright intellects. Then shall we experience what is best in life.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE LOFODEN ISLANDS, 1915

FIVE days after leaving England the traveller passes the Norwegian town of "Bodö" and arrives at the Vestfjord, from which, just to the north, the jagged, tooth-like peaks of the central Lofoden Islands come into view. Away to the west is Norkemaes, at whose southern extremity lies the "maelstrom," long since celebrated in the sensational works of Jules Verne and Edgar Allan Poe, a tumbling mass of meeting currents whose waters are now scarcely regarded as a bar to navigation or even a danger to small craft. Two days before our advent the auxiliary cruiser *India* had been sunk by a German submarine with a loss of a hundred and twenty men of her gallant crew, and some of the crippled survivors, saved by the *Gothaland*, were at that moment struggling for life in the houses of kindly fishermen. In the great World War the Norwegians to a certain extent had enlisted their sympathies on the side of their old friends, the English, but the whole country had been so flooded with German news of victory, and explanations of German greatness and "kultur," that there were not only many admirers, but active adherents to the Teutonic cause. We had evidence that in all towns, especially in the far Arctic regions, agents—German and Norwegian—were industriously at work

spreading the pæan of future German triumph and vilifying the hated English and their command of the seas. Spies lurked in every village, and movements of any travelling Englishman were watched with sleuth-hound thoroughness. "All Norway has eyes and ears this year," remarked our keeper, Ericksen, one day, and we soon found how true this was, even in the remotest valleys of the outer islands. At Bodö I recognised an old enemy of mine, one Juell, formerly German Consul at Namsos, who had once played me a dirty trick, and I saw him come swiftly on board and search the luggage to see what sort of strangers there were travelling north, but I took good care he did not see me, though he may have ascertained that certain stupid Englishmen, who regarded war as a mere side-issue, were on their way to Lango to shoot as they had always done, for he left the vessel after a very cursory survey. At midnight we entered the lovely port of Solvaer in the island of Vaago. It was still but 1.30 a.m., but quite light, when we changed into a tiny coasting steamer, and then worked north-west through the beautiful Raft-sund, a narrow strait enclosed by jagged mountains, whose tops showed green and violet in the growing light. We touched at little fishing ports, where boats came in from the great herring fishing. The edges of the Raft-sund and the islands of Vaago, Hindo, Hadsel and Lango support a large population, now all aboat at the fishing of herring in the sea to the west. In winter the main fjord is the centre of another great industry for the capture of cod, and the people are fortunate in possessing two distinct periods in which to do their work and make a living. In

summer the women and boys and girls attend to the croft, for small cattle and sheep flourish, and they can grow fine crops of rough cereals, potatoes and hay. (The cattle and potatoes seem to live a life of chronic disappointment. They have hardly recovered from the severities of the climate when another winter is upon them.)

It took seven hours to reach the little port at Skagen, on the island of Lango. Here we were met by our keeper, Emil Ericksen, who afterwards proved an excellent friend and helper in more ways than one. Ericksen was a nervous, highly-strung creature of some fifty-seven years. Like many Norwegians, he was very excitable, but possessed a large share of intelligence and buoyancy of spirits (in spite of the fact that he possessed thirteen children). In him I found a sympathetic friend, as he loved Natural History. He spoke English quite well, and was fond of attaching weird adjectives to a multitude of subjects. Most things that excited his imagination were described as " curioos " or " mystarioos." The fact that a certain person was the son of a clergyman, that cartridges could be made damp-proof, that the weather was about to change, that people came from other lands, and a host of normal matters, were all " mystarioos," whilst the fact that my companion was about to be married was only " curioos." It was all very strange and wonderful. Yet his observation of Nature was, for the most part, accurate and intelligent. The Hooded Crow was aptly designated as " the baddest of birds of all place." Occasionally he lapsed into strange comparisons. A certain German agent whom we were engaged in out-

witting was described as a "man of many bottoms," a curious simile that reminded one of certain lines in the "Pink 'Un" about Mr. Gladstone.

There was no carriole available at Skagen, so my companion, Captain Bennett, and I mounted bicycles and rode six miles along a level road to Forö, where we found a simple farmhouse, kept by one Fru Larsen, which was to be our home for some time. The house stands on rising ground above a beautiful fresh-water lake known as "Henderson's," the home of numerous brown trout. Over the hill about 600 yards away is a large lake of brackish water known as the "Salt Lake," which connects with the sea by means of a stream. Immediately below this lake is a sea wall, which blocks the tide from coming further. To the west another strip of land almost encloses a large bay, which at low tide is a series of great pools covered with rocks, seaweed and sand. Through the centre of this runs the stream from the Salt Lake to the sea, and at the narrow channel where it emerges to the ocean there is a considerable rush of water at low tide. Here we sometimes had excellent sport with the sea-trout until early September, when a great spate allowed the majority of the fish to run up to the fresh-water lakes and streams. The estuary and sea-lakes and adjacent fresh-water marshes were a favourite feeding-ground for many species of waders now on migration. The most abundant species were the Ruffs, which flew in all directions, sometimes in large flocks. As a rule, they were very tame, but became nervous and unsettled in rough or wet weather. Common Redshank, Curlew, Whimbrel, Snipe, were also plentiful, and an

ALASKAN MOOSE-HEAD ORNAMENTED WITH HUNTING SCENES

interesting bird, the Dusky Redshank, was by no means rare. These uttered a curious cry, "Tuh-wheet," which at once called attention to their presence. They went about singly or in pairs, sometimes in company with Ruffs or common Redshank, and were not very shy. All the specimens I noticed were young birds of the year. There were a few Oyster-Catchers, and only one flock of Dunlins. Several large flocks of Little Stints were noticed on August 20th. These remained with us for three weeks. On August 24th, walking on the shore, I put up a small wader whose cry I was not acquainted with. I killed it with a long shot, and found it to be a specimen of Temminck's Stint. It uttered a call like "Skerveek," quite different from the cry of the Little Stint, which is a long-drawn, peeping call.

Golden Plover were scarce, though I killed a brace on August 25th still in full summer plumage. On August 26th two parties of Wigeon visited us and a family of four Graylag Geese, which, however, only remained for two days. Eleven old male Golden-eyes in eclipse plumage were a special object of the chase. They were extremely shy, and could only be approached on the rare occasions when they fed within shot of the shore. One morning I spied one so feeding on the Salt Lake, and by three advance runs, made when the bird was under water, I got within range of a long shot. As the duck appeared I fired, and he lay kicking on his back. I made sure he was mine, and walked some fifty yards down-wind so as to reach a point where I expected the body to drift in. But alas! I had not gone twenty yards when the tenacious

duck righted himself, commenced to dive and was at once out of shot of the shore. To row a boat and shoot a diving Golden-eye is a physical impossibility, so I went to a cottage close by and found a very small friend of mine—one Veders—who agreed to come and assist in the capture of the wounded bird. By this time the duck had swum far into the lake, but I soon found him with the aid of the glass. My little friend was not, however, strong enough to row the pace of the wounded Golden-eye, and after several ineffectual attempts to come within a shot we eventually lost our quarry.

The bird of all others that excited me was the Goosander male in eclipse plumage. So far as I know, there is not a specimen of the male Goosander in its plumage like the female in Great Britain. The only two known examples are in the collection of Mr. Schöeler at Copenhagen, and he kindly lent them to me to figure in my work on the *British Diving Ducks*. Altogether twelve of these fine birds frequented the sea bay and Salt Lake. They constantly passed at half tide from the sea to the lake. I know of no bird that possesses such wonderful eyesight as the Goosander, or is at this season so shy and cunning. The sight of a man at half a mile is sufficient to put it on the wing, and it is at all times most difficult to stalk or to lie in wait for, for it chooses very open spaces of water which are not commanded by projecting headlands. Unlike the Red-breasted Merganser, which is common and easily outmanœuvred, the Goosander only offers the gunner a chance when it is forced to cross some neck of land in its passage from one sheet of water to another, and occasionally when

feeding in-shore. Between two fresh-water lakes it generally flies out of shot, but coming in from the sea, especially if there is a head wind, it often comes over low. The great difficulty in securing one of these birds in the present locality was that the Goosander passed at points on the long sea wall and the inner lake barrier which varied from day to day. It is easy to command a neck, but it is not easy to fix the exact place in a wall some 500 yards long over which birds may pass at any point. After two failures, when the faithful Ericksen tried to drive the Goosanders (which I had previously spied feeding in the Salt Lake) over the lake barrier, I made observation of the passage of the birds across the sea wall on their advent from the sea itself. After seeing them pass up and down for several days, I noticed that they generally crossed at one of two points. The most likely of these was at a spot in the centre of the wall where a convex band brought sea and inner estuary close together. Sea ducks always choose such a place to fly over. On August 22nd I walked across the lake barrier and ascertained that no Goosanders were on the lake itself. This meant that they would come up at half tide. A walk of a mile took me to my point on the sea wall, and I had hardly got there and settled myself in a nice declivity, when to my intense disappointment I saw no fewer than ten male Goosanders pass over the sea wall some 200 yards to my right and go up-wind to the Salt Lake. I thought that those birds constituted the stock in the district, but about ten minutes later a single old male crossed the barrier only just out of shot to my right. An hour went by and the

evening was closing in. In a short time the flight to feeding-grounds would have passed and it would be useless to remain longer, when, looking out to sea, I noticed some tiny dots coming from the south. I at once got under cover. At first they inclined towards the coast to the right, and then, as they came nearer, I saw them turn and point straight in my direction. They were two Goosanders, both going very fast, with a slight following wind. Fortunately they were not high, and as they came up over me I killed both with a quick right and left, when they fell dead almost at my feet.

I tried the Goosanders again several times after this lucky evening, as I was anxious to get a specimen for the British Museum and some of my friends who are keen duck enthusiasts, but no chance again presented itself for some time.

The Goosanders usually fed in the shallows on the far side of the lake, where, owing to its open nature, their feeding-ground was impregnable. However, on September 1st they came to our side of the lake, and frequented the exit of the fresh-water stream that flowed from "Henderson's." Here I observed them one morning, and after waiting an hour they worked in to the stones in shallow water within fifty yards of my hiding-place. If they had been diving, a successful shot would have been a certainty, but in very shallow water Goosander feed in a peculiar fashion and do not dive. They swim swiftly to and fro amongst the rocks with the head under water. When a small flounder, sea-trout or other fish is spied, they dash headlong in pursuit. The head is then raised at once, whether the pursuit

is successful or not, so that the bird has time to look about and survey its surroundings. On this occasion the two Goosanders were actually chasing a small fish when I dashed from my perch, a huge rock on the high road, but they raised their heads before I had travelled far and caught me in the open at forty-five yards, when a long shot was unsuccessful. Two days later I noticed two Goosanders come to the fresh-water burn and start fishing. With some trouble I got to my former position, within 100 yards, and lay there, watching some chance to occur whereby I could steal a further advance. I saw the birds catch numerous small trout by swift pursuit in the shallow water, their bodies being still above water. Then they suddenly left the burn mouth and commenced fishing along the lake-edge. On my left was a large mound of heather, and by running quickly round this I knew that if the birds continued to feed on their present line I should probably get an easy shot. So swiftly, however, does the Goosander swim, that I had just reached the water's edge under cover of the hill when I saw one of the birds approaching within easy shot. The second bird was far in the rear, so I knew I must be content with one of them. My quarry came on, hunting the shallows by dipping his head to survey the bottom, and gave me an easy chance at twenty-five yards, which resulted in his immediate death. This was another old male in full eclipse.

On September 7th I lay behind a rock which Golden-eyes often approached as they fed along the Salt Lake shore. About two in the afternoon two Goosanders came in from the sea and

approached my position. They hunted a shallow within 100 yards of me for some time, until one of them caught a sea-trout of nearly half a pound. Immediately he caught his prey the other bird dashed at him and endeavoured to tear it out of his mouth. Accordingly he swam away, swiftly pursued by his companion, and the chase lasted a long time, the owner of the fish twisting and turning to escape his greedy comrade, who made frequent dives to come up alongside and wrest the fish from him. Meanwhile the successful fisherman kept shaking the fish and beating it on the water so as to kill it and make it more easy to swallow. At last the attentions of the pursuer became so assiduous that the captor of the fish began to swallow his prey. He got it down all except the tail-end, and this the other bird seized, so that for a time it was a case of "pull devil, pull baker." In the end the owner of the fish struggled free, and the last of the disputed feast vanished from sight. Much water was swallowed, and it was a long time before the fish disappeared down the gullet. The bird then drifted out on to the lake to digest his prey, whilst the unsuccessful fisherman returned to the lake-edge to continue his fishing.

Having exhausted the possibilities of the shallows, this Goosander commenced diving. He soon passed along to a small promontory, and as his dives were of some duration and the distance was not more than 150 yards, I chanced being detected and ran on to the promontory. The bird then came up just as I arrived there, and at once sprang to wing. He was well within shot, and I laid him dead on the water before he had gone any distance. This

completed my collection of Goosanders, and I considered myself lucky to have secured four old males in the rare plumage of eclipse. The old male Golden-eyes in eclipse gave me almost as much trouble to secure. But at last I found a point at the corner of "Henderson's" where they occasionally "broke" for the sea lake and crossed a narrow piece of land. Here I secured two old males by long shots, whilst my friend, Mr. Leaf, shot another as it passed his boat whilst engaged in driving the birds.

Our work on matters I need not discuss occupied a good part of our time, but occasionally we were able to take a day at the ripa, which were here more abundant than in any place in Norway. We had four setters, all very moderate but useful, and with these we worked the hillsides and birch woods which clothed the lower slopes of the mountains. Sometimes we found the birds numerous and at others "patchy," but some excellent days yielded bags of twenty to thirty brace. On one occasion when a number of birds were driven up into a wooded corrie we sent the men round and had a little drive, which yielded ten brace, but it was very difficult to recover dead birds, owing to the mass of rocks and thick undergrowth. On two occasions I shot twenty-three and twenty-five brace, and enjoyed the shooting even more than grouse in Scotland, as one has to shoot quickly and straight to ensure success, the birds often being out of view almost as soon as they rise. The great charm of Lango shooting and fishing was its variety. One could always go out for a short time and be sure of some excellent sport with rod or gun within an

hour or two of the house. With one boy it is possible to drive little places for duck, which were numerous, whilst a couple of hours on "Henderson's" usually meant a dozen or two nice yellow trout, with a sea-trout or two to add variety. One evening I got hold of a beautiful sea-trout, which, having just come from the sea, fought with especial vigour for ten minutes. At last he gave in and was successfully brought to the net, and proved to be over 4 lbs. Another day on the sea stream I lost two similar fish, both of which made a dash for the sea and got round the masses of floating sea-weed. As they jumped when hooked, I feel sure they were both over 6 lbs., but then they got away, so I may have been mistaken. At any rate none of us killed a fish over 5 lbs., though we saw several up to 8 lbs. or 9 lbs. leaping in the stream.

Previous to this visit to Norway I had made some study of the German spy system, as it was necessary to do so concerning certain work which I had undertaken. The German system was far more elaborate than ours, but not necessarily better. In every country, neutral and otherwise, both prior to and during the Great War, the Germans had organised large bodies of men (60,000) to help their Intelligence Departments, and these in neutral countries were not casual visitors, but mostly men engaged in some business where their activities would the least be suspected. In many instances they were invalided soldiers, or men incapable of serving in the army owing to defective eyesight, and in consequence it was easy to detect them, because (1) nearly all wore glasses or pince-nez; (2) nearly all carried a German book under their

arm to read at dull moments; (3) all, almost without exception, wore German boots and clothes, which are easily recognised by their cut.

Early in the war Germany had in neutral countries probably ten spies to our one, but though so numerous—now receiving a regular retaining fee—they were not a particularly intelligent body of men. They nearly always hunted in couples, and, apart from the points of recognition I have already enumerated, had a way of standing about aimlessly or whispering in corners much after the manner of spies in the cinematograph.

Since the majority of these men were engaged in some business in Norway, and the people of that country were, from the years 1914–1917, in a constant state of blithering terror of what the Germans would do to them if any severe restrictions were placed on their people, and also since during all this period the Norwegians believed that it was impossible for the Allies to break the power of Germany, nothing was ever done to clear the country of a system which daily produced results highly detrimental to Norwegian interests. These German spies notified (by means of carefully hidden wireless telegraphy) the advent and departure of all Norwegian and foreign ships, and were responsible for the sinking of a great part of the Norwegian ships. Though the Norwegian Government was well aware of these activities, they did absolutely nothing to prevent this leakage of news until 1917, when one-third of their whole tonnage (3,000,000 tons) had been destroyed. The owners of steam- and sailing-ships were as much to blame as any one, for they really did not seem to care if their ships

were sunk or not, since the insurance money was always forthcoming, and in most instances (until 1917) the German U-boats treated the crews with humanity, and generally helped or allowed them to escape. When, however, the insurance companies refused further insurance, and nearly all the passenger steamers, as well as other ships, were sunk and the crews maltreated, the Government at last took steps to clear out the nests of spies that made Bergen and other ports a byword.

When Captain Bennett and I arrived at Christiania by the steamship *Bessheim*, in August 1915, we were met by two German spies. These gentlemen kindly shadowed us to the railway station and handed us over to two others, who doubtless wired our departure to Trondhjem, where two more "stage-villains" met us and conducted us to the ship leaving for the north. In the Lofodens we thought we had shaken them off, but inquiries elicited the fact that "a Russian" had on the previous day arrived at Lango, and was domiciled on a farm close at hand. I need not state all the methods we took to get rid of this gentleman, but having discovered that he was a German (without passports), his ejection by the local "lendsman" was only a matter of hours.

Our subsequent experience with German spies may be of interest to the reader, as it was to us. Having successfully completed our work in the Lofodens, we left in October for the mainland, and caught the coasting steamer at Solvaer. I sat in the saloon carefully surveying our fellow-passengers, who for the most part were young Norwegian officers returning from manœuvres on the high-fjelds.

There were, however, two men I could not place. Neither wore glasses, but were reading Norwegian literature (Ibsen's plays), and both wore Norwegian clothes and boots. If they were German spies, as I suspected, they were men out of the ordinary, and would therefore require watching, for I was convinced they would do us some mischief if given the opportunity. It so happened that a Norwegian gentleman, connected with the oil industry, and a friend I had known in former years, was on board, and to him I applied for help, as I found him devoted to our cause. I asked him to study these two men and to talk to them and to find out their nationality, but to use extreme caution. After two days his conclusions were that they were undoubtedly Germans, but men who had lived so long in Norway that they made but few mistakes to prove that they were not actually Norwegians. Their behaviour was most correct, and whilst on board ship little was to be feared except a search of our papers, which in this case would have been futile. It was on our arrival at Trondhjem that they made their mistake. As soon as the vessel came to the quay they both hurried off and, placing their luggage on a carriole, stood behind it whispering and looking up at the deck, where I was resting on the bulwarks and apparently taking no notice of them. All the other passengers descended from the ship and departed on their several ways, but still the two spies stood behind the carriole watching. A sudden inspiration caused me to call Bennett, who was below, and requesting him to go down on the quay, and to attach no importance to what I said, I called loudly to him, "Go up to the Jernbahn

(station), old chap, and book our luggage to Christiania." On giving these directions the two spies at once smiled, whispered together for a moment, sprang into the carriole and went off, doubtless to the station to send a telegram.

"What fool business are you up to now?" quoth my friend when he came up on deck. "Well, it is just this," I replied. "Those fellows are up to no good, and if we go by the *Bessheim* we shall probably find ourselves in a mess. I for one am going to Bergen." Argument is easy with normal creatures, but my friend was about to be married, and so in his case it required some very urgent reasons to make him see the point, but at last he gave in and went south by the slower route. Three days later we steamed into Bergen, and the first news that met us was that the *Bessheim* had been stopped in the Christiania Fjord—a pretty good piece of impudence—by a U-boat, and the Captain requested at once to deliver up two Englishmen whose names and appearance coincided exactly with our own. The Captain shouted that no such persons were on board, and as he was in territorial waters he refused to allow his ship to be searched. The Hun officer, however, would take no refusal, and threatened to sink the ship unless his orders were obeyed, and so when an examination of the passengers was being made, an unfortunate Englishman, who must have borne some slight resemblance to one of us, was ordered on board the U-boat and taken to Germany. He was detained there in prison for six months, and then released as not being the person wanted, and if ever he reads this will, I fear, bear us no special affection. All this

I heard afterwards at the offices of the Norwegian Company which owned the *Bessheim*, and it was certainly fortunate that we had escaped from the net so carefully woven by the German spies.

One of the most curious things about cleverness is its stupidity, and the more intelligent any people become the more prone are they to fall into folly. Germany proclaimed herself to the world as the most highly civilised of all races, and yet she committed the most appalling errors any nation could commit. Her scientists invented poison gas, forgetting that this sword was double-edged, and in their conceit they imagined there were no chemists in England. To-day thousands of German homes are mourning their lost sons in consequence. But of all the foolish things they did, perhaps the most utterly stupid was the killing of Edith Cavell and Captain Fryatt, for it added immense strength in recruits to the armies of England and America. The whole world was shocked at these crimes, and to-day two imperishable figures sit on high in judgment over their murderers. No incidents of the war stirred the English people as did the killing of these two humble people. Their deaths were the acts of angry bullies who imagined themselves safe from reprisal. Such people must win, or suffer terrible punishment themselves. And so we have the reckoning, and Germany has only proved how stupid she was, after all.

# CHAPTER X

## AN ARCTIC RESIDENCE, 1916

HAMMERFEST is the most northern town in the world, further to the north, in fact, even than the Bering Straits, and for seven months in the year it lies silent in the grip of the Arctic winter. It is a gloomy spot, locked in on the northern Finmark coast, and sheltered by a barrier of islands which do little to check the constant snow-storms that sweep down from Spitzbergen, only a short distance to the north, in the Polar Sea. In ordinary times the place is far beyond the ken of the average tourist. But in the year 1916 Hammerfest was of some importance, being the central point of the main cod industry of Norway. Day and night from April till October the "chuff-chuff" of the petrol engines of the fishing-fleet echoed through the mountain walls that enclosed the little harbour. Though so small a port, as many as 5000 oil-driven sea-going fishing-boats make Hammerfest their base, and to-day it is the chief distributing centre of Northern Europe, where numerous coasting boats come to collect the salted fish and carry it away to the various markets of the south, as well as to Russia. In early spring Solvaer, the base of the great Lofoden cod fishery, is a greater hive of industry, but from early May onwards Hammerfest teems with life and work.

Its importance in 1916 was due to the fact that the large food supply furnished by the northern seas was for the most part being collected, and sent through neutral waters to Germany. It is true that at this date we had established a blockade of our chief enemy, but in point of fact before America came in to the war, and made our grip on the Central Empires a more or less real one, the numerous back-doors of import and export between Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland and Germany were to all intents and purposes open, and used to the utmost extent that was possible by neutrals whose sole purpose was not the triumph of Right over Wrong, but personal gain.

There is an old sentiment in England—unfortunately a wholly erroneous one—that in the Great War Norway was heart and soul with the Allies. This view in the first place is gathered partly from the experience of tourists and sportsmen, who are, as a rule, incapable of judging the race as a whole, owing to their want of knowledge of the language, and the fact that hotel-keepers, peasants, and hunters *of the interior* have a preference for Englishmen, who had always spent their money freely in those northern towns and wilds. In the second place, our people thought that the views expressed in such excellent papers as the *Aftenposten* and the *Tidens Tegn*—always largely quoted by our own newspapers—represented the national opinion, whereas it only voiced the sentiment of the people of Christiania and small scattered groups of the more intellectual in various coast towns, such as Christiansund and Trondhjem.

The true facts of the case, as well known to the

British Consuls, who almost alone understood the basic opinions of the Norwegians as a whole during the war, were that views favourable to the Allies were centred in the intelligent and broad-minded people of Christiania, together with a few isolated individuals in various ports, as well as in the more thinly populated interior, the small Army and Navy, and the personnel of the Norwegian mercantile fleet, who had every cause to loathe the German barbarians. On the other hand, the main population of Norway, settled on an immense coast-line from Arendal in the south to remote Vardo on the Finmark coast of the Polar Sea, were actively or passively pro-German. This feeling was sporadic, and seldom openly expressed as far as Trondhjem, owing to fear of our counter-measures, but north of this point the people of the coast-line were more and more active in their work and sympathies to help Germany. This the traveller found as he went north and the fishing interests became more important. Moreover, the constant fear that Germany was invincible and would certainly take reprisals in the future if her demands were not met, was another potent factor in all Norwegian acts. The reasons for this are quite easily defined. Germany before the war had "collared" the greater part of the northern fish industry. She bought nearly the whole of her fish, and her commercial travellers (all speaking Norwegian fluently) travelled everywhere on the coast-line and sold their goods. Nearly everything in the shops was German. No English commercial traveller ever touched these remote regions. Almost the only imports from our islands were Manchester

goods, coal, salt, and fishing material. Thus, without going further into the commercial and political aspects of the case, it will be seen that the Germans had an almost unassailable grip on the Norwegian fish industry, practically the chief business of Norway, and that only by threats of reprisals could we prevent nearly the whole of the produce going to Germany, since a free and safe waterway existed between Kirkanaes and the Baltic German ports. Moreover, the Germans were paying the Norwegians something like a 600 per cent. advance on the price of their fish, whilst we, who only began to buy fish on a large scale in 1916, were offering only something like a 200 per cent. advance. The results were therefore obvious, even at the risk to the merchants of being put on the "black list" or threatened with deprivation of coal or salt. These penalties, however, for the most part, were only laughed at, as they were seldom carried into effect.

Hammerfest lies on the Arctic coast of Norway, 160 miles south of Bear Island and 450 miles from Spitzbergen. As a rule its climate is vile, but it has intervals of good behaviour, when mosquitoes, "the size of humming-birds," some sufferers say, arise from the soil and render life insupportable. Winter lasts for eight months in the year, so the brief summer—which officially begins about June 6th, sometimes in July, and sometimes not at all—is always hailed with delight. In 1914 there were but three fine days in the year. This Arctic severity, alternating with rain and fog, is due to the proximity of the perpetual Polar ice-pack, which is never much further away than 120 miles. When

the wind blows from the north it is always cold, and one is glad of a greatcoat. However, in 1916 we were lucky, and experienced spells of lovely warm weather in late May, June and July, with gentle breezes from the south-west.

Hammerfest itself lies snugly in the quiet bay, surrounded on three sides by mountains covered in May with snow-fields ten to twelve feet deep. To the west it is more or less open, but protected by the long island of Sorö, on which are high mountains four or five miles distant. The harbour is deep to the quay sides, and in spring is crammed with the small motor fishing-boats, whose crews are ever coming back, getting ready again, or going north to fish. In my quiet room in the hotel, facing the west, one was never, day or night, out of the sound of the passing boats, the croak of the raven, or the screams of amorous Herring-Gulls.

The fishermen prepare their long, deep sea-lines in harbour, some of their lines carrying as many as 15,000 hooks. They bait with small fresh herring caught by special bait steamers at the mouth of the Alten Fjord. Women are employed at baiting, and some of them earn as much as forty kroners a day at this job, although it only lasts a short time. The boats are at sea for from three to four days, and then return with their catch and sell the fish to local merchants, or to sailing vessels, who gut and salt them, and, when full, go south to Bergen and Aalesund.

In spring the fish usually caught are cod, but numbers of halibut, hake, haddock, red fish, coal fish, and flounders are also taken. The spring fishing of 1916 was more or less a failure,

owing to immense numbers of Bearded Seal (*erignathus barbatus*), which pursued the cod and drove them into deep waters. In consequence two-thirds of the boats had left Hammerfest by the end of the first week in June, going to their homes in South Finmark, the Lofodens, and Vesteraalen. Here the men work on their small farms for three weeks, and then many of them return to take part in the netting of saithe (coal fish) in late June and July. These inferior fish are caught in large nets near the surface, and they are split and dried or salted, and sold to the Russians who come here in the summer with cargoes of wood from Archangel. A third fishing season for herring is September, October and November, and this is one of great importance to all northern Norway, from the Lofodens to Vardo. It is curious that in these northern waters the fish will not look at any bait except small herring and *arctotis malotis*, and these fish must be absolutely fresh. Down south about Aalesund, cod and other fish are caught even with salted herring, but here bait must be renewed after each expedition. This is due to the abundance of natural food in the northern seas. No one in Hammerfest talks of anything but the price of fish, and in this year of world's strife the telegrams posted everywhere were not of battles, but of the market values of fish in the south. The fishermen, of whom some 20,000 pass through Hammerfest in the spring, are an exceedingly well-behaved, amiable set of men. There is no drunkenness, and the whole place might be a perpetual Sunday in Scotland.

Hammerfest is called a town, but it is really

only a big fishing village of some 3000 people. The one main street wanders round the harbour, and consists of shops chiefly devoted to the fishing industry. Here there is a bank or a saw-mill, and there a shark oil factory, which never forgets to remind you of its disagreeable presence. A fur shop displays inferior wares at about twice the price of Bergen or Trondhjem, the one good thing being excellent house slippers of fur and sealskin, sold at three kroners a pair.

Another Hammerfest industry is conducted by Mr. Robertson, Messrs. Federsen and Nissen, and H. Finckenhagen, who each possess six small motor-driven vessels for seal, Polar bear and walrus hunting. These go to the northern pack opposite the Kola Peninsula about March, and work westwards along the ice to South Spitzbergen. They are away for three or four months, and kill large numbers of Greenland, Ring, Hooded and Bearded Seals, as well as a certain number of walrus and Polar bears. Their method of hunting has been too frequently described to warrant description here, but an old hunter told me a very interesting fact regarding a habit of the walrus. *Unless* wounded—when they are apt to be dangerous—these harmless creatures are full of curiosity. When disturbed on the ice, and the harpooner has been unable to make his "cast," the animals dive and come up round the boats. The men then keep perfectly silent, and it is a common habit for the walrus to come and place his tusks over the side of the boat, and remain hooked there gazing solemnly at the crew. The men then remain without movement, whilst one nearest the walrus gently

lifts the tusks over the gunwale and pushes the animal back into the water. Accidents in hunting rarely occur, but when two walruses are harpooned, and one follows the herd away from the boat whilst the other dives straight to the bottom, it is necessary to have an axe handy to sever the rope attached to the second animal, or the boat will be upset. Occasionally the little vessels are crushed in the ice, in which case the men escape in their small boats, and are generally picked up by other vessels, but one was completely lost, with all hands, in 1914, owing to a sudden gale.

To this melancholy place I came as British Vice-Consul on May 15th, 1916, after a visit to the British Embassy in Christiania, and at once took up my duties. The consular and naval work was not easy, and occupied the greater part of the day, and it was only at night in summer time that I was able to go out into the mountains and get some exercise and relaxation in watching the various Arctic birds now arriving on their spring migration. In early May the whole country was still wrapped in its shroud of snow and ice—ten feet deep in some places—and no birds were to be seen but the resident Ravens and Magpies, except a few Herring, Kittiwake, and Lesser Black-backed Gulls, which had already commenced their courtships. On May 25th came the first spring arrivals, flocks of Snow Buntings two hundred strong, the black-backed males resplendent in their new plumage. In a few days these beautiful little birds began to sing, though there was no sign of the ice-break, and in a week all flocks had broken up into pairs and scattered over the adjoining hills. About the

same date came a few Redwings and Fieldfares, the latter singing charmingly, often on the wing, with a song somewhat resembling our Blackbird in its soft and mellow tones. Then before the end of the month came little parties of Shore Larks and the large Greenland Wheatear, which uttered a jerky, scratchy song and gave a pretty aerial courtship, rather like that of a Whitethroat, but with the sudden rise into the air of the Tree-Pipit. On June 4th there was a big crack, and a pool was formed at the upper end of the lake above the town, and here came two pairs of the Long-tailed Duck, the males uttering their musical cries, and one pair of Red-throated Divers. From now onwards during the ensuing fortnight, with every day of increasing warmth new species arrived, and at once indulged in their individual efforts and songs characteristic of the nuptial display. Fieldfares were particularly gay, and indulged in mad chases like our thrushes, and when once paired were very bold and gallant, even driving off the ubiquitous Ravens. On June 8th I heard a note new to me, and, advancing amongst some scrub, saw a female Bluethroat. She was shortly joined by two brilliant males, their gorgeous throats shining like jewels in the sun, and they went through a leaping courtship, something like a part of the "show" exhibited by the common Robin. On June 6th some Iceland Gulls, a Red-throated Pipit, and a party of Bramble Finches passed, going north, and numbers of small Northern Willow Warblers were noticed singing in the low, stunted willow-bushes. So the advent of migrants went on all through June, until the latecomers, such as the Dotterel and the Buntings, had

moved up to their summer home. On the coast some Eiders were always to be seen, as well as a few Sea-Eagles. One day in July, as I was painting on a hillside above the sea, I heard a yelping note, and, looking down, I saw an old Sea-Eagle, closely followed by her brown young one. She carried a brilliant scarlet fish (Oer or Rode-fisk) in her claws, and kept lifting it as if to entice her offspring forward in its flight. On another occasion I heard a loud rush of wings and, looking upwards, saw a Golden Eagle pursuing a Sea-Eagle through the air, the latter twisting and turning to avoid its more active enemy, and in doing so it dropped what I took to be a large fish into the sea. Sea-Eagles often passed outside the harbour and along the coast, but they were not nearly so numerous in northern Norway as I had seen them twenty years before. Only on the outer islands do they seem to be holding their own, for there they breed on inaccessible cliffs, whilst on the mainland every man's hand and gun is against them. The bird of northern Norway is the Raven, and this clever marauder somehow manages to make a living even in winter, when all other birds, except a few raptorials, the two species of Ripa, and the Magpie, would starve. I do not think that the Raven becomes adult until it is two or three years old, and consequently we see large flocks of immatures at all seasons living on garbage, fish, or the dead and wounded creatures its sharp eyes may discover. I noticed that, even in Hammerfest, where the species is so abundant, certain pairs always took up certain beats and drove off all trespassers. There were three pairs of these old residents in rock

cliffs quite close to the town, and each of these seemed to possess cries and habits peculiar to themselves. One old fellow always "clanked" like a worn-out bell, another uttered an even deeper note, and a third made a cry like a throaty tenor whose voice had cracked. They were always sitting or flying about the same group of rocks, and never associated with the flocks. Twice I saw forty ravens in one flock, and once Mr. Lodge and I counted forty-seven.

As an instance of those predatory instincts in a bird not usually associated with such violent characteristics, I may relate the following—

One day in July Mr. Lodge, the artist, and I were sitting on a rock above the lake. It was sunny and warm, and we were idly resting and listening to the calls of the various birds. In some stunted willows some twenty yards behind us was a family of Magpies, father, mother and five little fellows just able to fly, all in a row. A bird flashed by, and we saw it was a Redwing without a tail. It was flying very quickly, but the movement, though so rapid, did not escape the eye of one of the parent Magpies. In an instant it saw that the Redwing had no tail, and would therefore probably be unable to steer, and so could possibly be caught. I never saw a Magpie fly like that before, for it dashed after the Redwing at full speed, quite as fast as any raptorial, and rapidly overhauled it. Coming to the lake-edge the unfortunate Redwing darted this way and that, and would certainly have been captured had not a watchful Raven swooped down from the cliffs and claimed a share in the chase. The new-comer first of all drove off

the Magpie, which came quite slowly straight back to his family. Then he began peering under the stones where the poor Redwing had taken refuge. It was most amusing to watch him, as he cocked his head on one side and "keeked" into every likely sanctuary. At last he gave it up, that is to say, apparently, but not in reality. Such an old-timer was not going to be done by any wily Redwing. He only retired to a point of vantage a few yards away, and just waited and watched till the would-be victim should recover its equanimity and emerge. But the Redwing had got such a fright that it never appeared again, and the patience of even the old Raven being at last exhausted, he retired to his favourite cliff.

I had hoped to enjoy a little fishing in the neighbourhood, but this proved a sad disappointment. I tried in several lakes minnow, worm and fly without success, these Arctic trout seemed to be impervious to all lures. Two days' journey away was the celebrated Alten, one of the best rivers in Norway for salmon, and though the Duke of Roxburgh had kindly given me permission to fish, I could not get away from my work for such amusement, so what short leisure I had was devoted to landscape painting and wandering over the high fjeld, where bird and animal life was very scarce, but blueberries plentiful in their season. Life was made up in sending and receiving code telegrams and visiting local merchants and ships to carry out the instructions of our Government and Admiralty. Some of it was by no means pleasant work, for during 1916 the Norwegians regarded British Consuls as little better than interlopers—"policemen"

they called us—who were always interfering with their rights as free citizens of the world. Many of them simply refused to stand it, and ignored our authority, openly claiming their right to trade with the Germans, whilst others—though they hated us none the less—did accept most of our impositions, as they feared the stoppages of coal and salt—commodities essential to their business. In this atmosphere of pro-Germanism one had no friends,[1] and no one to talk to. The telephone and telegraph girls were all German spies, and one had to be very careful that all messages were unintelligible to them. When the submarine difficulty began, in September, they did not actually refuse to take my messages to certain local people on the northern coasts who were working for me, but took good care that these messages were never delivered. There were other means, however, of getting information transmitted and received which they did not discover.

On the whole Norway is an attractive country, that is to say, in peace times, because then we are only thrown amongst the best of its people, who are genuinely glad to see us, when we are only bent on sport or pleasure. We think then only of its romantic sagas, of Odin, Thor, Freya, the Vikings, Valkyries and Valhalla, and we have visions of quaint gnomes, trolds and Lappish witches. Our sympathy goes out to these people,

[1] From this category I except my good friend Mr. Charles Robertson, a Norwegian of Scottish extraction, and by far the cleverest man in northern Norway. From him and his wife I received much kindness and hospitality at a time when such amenities were most appreciated, and to them I shall always owe a debt of gratitude.

for have we not also some of the old Viking blood in our veins, which stirs at tales of noble deeds in flood, fjeld and sea? Those of us, too, who have spent happy days with rod and gun with the charming folk of the forest, mountain and river, do not forget the true friendship of the farmers, hunters and simple peasants who shared our joys. There are, in fact, no more delightful people in Europe than the Namdalen farmers or their poorer brethren the "husmaend," who till the soil, and, sad though they often are, influenced by their grand and gloomy surroundings, there is a sweet melancholy about them which is as attractive as their kindly friendship. During eight seasons I had wandered amongst them, from Saetersdal to the Lofodens, now fishing or hunting the bear, the elk or the reindeer, and everywhere I learnt to love these people—

> "Country beloved, of the cloud-kissing ranges,
> Bountiful vales and munificent sea,
> Eager we plight thee the troth that ne'er changes—
> Ask it, our blood shall be lavished for thee."
>
> BJERREGARD.

In Christiania you will find a highly-educated and refined race of northern people whose lives and ambitions are dominated by the best sentiments of European culture. It is the home of art, literature, science and history, and its society of clever men and women are without that stultifying apathy and exclusiveness you often find in London, for instance. You have only to exhibit a desire to discuss such matters in a broad-minded spirit in Christiania, and you will be at once received

into the circles of intellect that exist there, without reserve or false sentiment.

But, alas, there is another side to the picture, and when the War let loose all its attendant concomitants of greed and self-interest, Norway was not without its opportunists and "gulach" millionaires, who became rich at the price of honour. In Denmark, Sweden, Holland and Norway there were many who only thought of profit, above all considerations of right and wrong. Here was the chance of a lifetime to become rich offered, and they took it.

"The nearer the frozen Pole you get," writes my dear old friend Sir Henry Pottinger, a man who, above all others, knew the Norse character, "the more does mute endurance become the prominent virtue and stolid selfishness the most conspicuous vice," and if we add to this the words of Kipling: "There's never a law of God or man goes north of 63," we get a very fair estimate of coast-line Norwegian character in the years 1914–1918. When we have left Trondhjem behind us we find, as it were, an entirely different race of Norsemen, comprising a mass of coast-line fishermen-farmers and small mercantile or fish merchants. Nearly everything and everybody depends directly or indirectly on fish, and no other subject seems ever to be discussed.

Let us look for a moment at these modern representatives of the old sea rovers. They are, for the most part, a commonplace people, with close-cropped hair and smooth faces. They wear sticky oilskins, fingerless gloves and woollen wrappers. They lounge about, expectorate freely

and seem to know little about seamanship, the oil motor having changed all that. They do not even take the trouble to repair their rotten harness, or to caulk their boats—an atmosphere of cheap second-rateness hangs like a pall over everything they do and everything they possess. Their houses and shops are paltry, and filled with cheap German rubbish. There is little life, warmth or colour in their lives or ambitions, and only a rise of half a kroner in the price of cod rouses the smallest enthusiasm. More handsome girls are to be seen in five minutes in a street in London or Florence than in a year in northern Europe, and severe outdoor life in their drab surroundings seems to be the ruin of female charm.

I have a note in my Hammerfest diary of 1916 that seems to be a reminiscence of Norwegian manners and customs—

"Norwegians sleep all the winter from October to May, only waking up occasionally to eat a little 'delicatessen,' 'gammleöst,' and other disgusting things. Summer is the time for talk and blasting operations.

"1 a.m. is the hour for heated discussions on the price of fish. If the house is built of wood and has no carpets they hammer on the floor at short intervals. Since from six to eight commercial travellers can easily occupy one bedroom, the din may be increased to an almost unlimited extent.

"2 a.m. is the correct hour for a game of rounders, which should always be played by lusty boys in front of an hotel. Little girls also play in the streets at this hour.

"8 a.m. If you have a boat to mend, now is the time to do it. Do not forget to make as much noise as possible—nails are cheap and a boat requires a lot.

"4 a.m. is a good time for a dynamite explosion. Sealers generally depart and arrive from the northern hunting-grounds at this hour, and every one who has a gun must fire it off.

"5 a.m. Start draining under a house. No clever person in Finmark makes the drains until after he has built the house, since you never know where water will come from when the snows melt. An iron crowbar is the most efficient weapon for removing rocks, and this should be clanked on the ground at intervals to prove that the workman is busy.

"6 a.m. Amorous Herring-Gulls and talkative Magpies tune up, whilst the constant "chuff-chuff" of the motor-boats coming and going to sea herald in another day.

"*Mem.* Certain Norwegian maxims of service to Norwegian servant girls—

"'All foreigners are mad, particularly Englishmen.'

"'Be sure and give an Englishman decayed and miserable items of clothing belonging to some one else in return for his own "wash."'

"'Always show in lots of visitors when the guests have gone to bed.'

"'Start washing the room in the middle of the day. If the guest is very busy sending important telegrams, make it so unpleasant for him that he will have to go out. If he paints pictures they must be carefully dusted with a dirty dishcloth,

and above all, ask him why the English Fleet does not destroy the Germans.'

"Another unholy joy is the digging of sundry holes in the streets or under the buildings. This is done nominally to let the water sink away, but actually to afford traps for the unwary and make a mess. There are four such holes, some five feet deep, within fifty yards of this house. They remind me of elephant pits I have seen in Central Africa, and afford much pleasure to the simple Norseman. Erik Eriksen or Ole Olsen begin an excavation, and in two or three days throw out a goodly pile of earth and rocks. It must not be supposed that they work all the time. On the contrary, most of the time is spent in rest, contemplation and gossip with passers-by, who all offer congratulations or advice. A nice big hole in the centre of a main thoroughfare seems to arouse a certain enthusiasm. It shows progress and attention to municipal matters, of which the town, which spends large sums in improvements, is justly proud, and a man working in the public service is somewhat of a personality. His work, however, is never finished, nor is it meant to be, and unsightly excavations which would be an annoyance and a danger in a less placid community are here nothing but a pleasure and a sign of industrial advancement. When the digger at last strikes water he will call you to look at the fruit of his labour, and then rests indefinitely amidst the charms of 'lageröl' and 'delicatessen,' until the town puts him on the next useless mess. I have seen many men making these holes, but never one filling them up. By August the place looks like a hillside in Cassiar,

where Grizzly Bears have been burrowing for gophers, but by October all is hidden again under a merciful winter shroud.

"Next to a rise of ten kroners per kilo in the price of cod, perhaps the greatest joy in life to the Norwegian peasant is a nice little explosion. Go where you will here, the Sabbathian calm in spring is sure to be broken by the crash of dynamite. There is a fire station about thirty yards from this house where they use blasting foundations—of course under a house already built—and eight or ten times a day the peaceful fjord and mountains reverberate with deafening reports. When the fuse is set two men are supposed to go out and warn passers-by to keep clear, but this they do not always do, with the result that I nearly had a nasty accident one day. Seeing the coast clear and no sentry in view, I walked up the rocks past the building under repair, and had just reached it when I saw two men sitting smoking under the lee of some rocks. At the same moment a deafening explosion took place from the fire station about twenty yards to my left, and I was violently thrown to the ground amid a shower of earth and rocks. For one moment I was half stunned, and feeling a stinging sensation at the back of my neck. I put my hand up and found it covered with blood. However, I soon ascertained that only the skin had been cut by flying gravel and nothing serious was the matter, so I went up to the men and said several things to them about their gross carelessness which might easily have had serious consequences. They were most apologetic, and begged me not to mention the matter to the authorities."

The melting of the snows in early June is at once a miracle and a thing of wonder. Our English springs are a succession of advances and retreats in the programme of Nature, and summer creeps in with alternate frost and sunshine, but in the Arctic regions there is a sudden upheaval. Winter is defeated in one short battle, and summer comes in with a triumphal burst of sunshine and flowers. In one week the snow-clad hillsides are pouring with innumerable torrents, great gaps of brown earth appear, and as it were in a few days the whole of the mountains are clothed with green Alpine plants, vast wreaths of *Silene acaulis*, *Dryas occipetala* and myriads of little blue and yellow violets in all the crevices. For a very few weeks this Alpine garden held its brief sway, and then the lake-edges and mountain streams were brilliant for another period with *caltha palustris*—a smaller form of our own kingcups—and a very beautiful blue vetch, *Vacca grecca*, Trollius and many flowers of which I did not know the names. The colouring, too, of many of the rocks was simply wonderful, whilst all are covered with patches of emerald green or yellow mosses. To the landscape painter all this wealth of colour both on land and sea presented a great difficulty. There was too much colour, and even in the autumn the fiery reds of the decaying vegetation rendered composition extremely difficult. Perhaps the most gorgeous effects of Nature to be seen in these Arctic regions was the wonderful *aurora borealis* or Northern Lights, which began in late October, and lit up the whole sky and surrounding mountains with the most theatrical display of dazzling colours. The

heavens often seemed to be on fire, and the general effect was even more gorgeous than the sunsets of August and September. Such sunsets as those of northern Europe are not to be seen in any other part of the world.

One evening I dashed in one of these, using nearly every colour in the spectrum, and when I looked at it next morning it seemed as if I had upset the paint-box. But a local merchant who saw it said it was just right, and bought it on the spot. Often I used to take a boat, have a little saithe fishing, and then paint the breaking sea on the outer islands as backgrounds for my eagle pictures, but the fishermen, who regarded me as a harmless lunatic or a cunning fellow with deep designs on the coast, were mostly unsympathetic, and thought more of the elusive kroner than the claims of art or sport. These men were not at all of the same class as the charming hunters and fishermen of the interior valleys, with whom I have spent many happy days in old times chasing the elk and the reindeer, and only exhibited a greed for money and material things. The oil motor has spoilt their skill as sailors, and the great price of fish has rendered them lazy and independent, without developing any tastes for the beautiful either in art or Nature.

Entirely different from them was my dear friend E., whom I sent for early in September to undertake certain confidential work. He was a hunter from the south, a man I had known intimately in former years, and one of the most charming creatures God ever made. He was a devoted friend and a born actor, as well as a very clever man. Well read, too, in spite of the fact that all

his life had been spent on the sea or hunting in the mountains and valleys of the Northland, and a man of such tact and observation that Nature seemed to have exactly fitted him for the position of trust for which he was now employed. It was necessary, however, that no one in Hammerfest should guess his connection with this particular work, and after giving him instructions, he left at once for certain northern ports, where he gathered information about the German spies and the movements of the U-boats that proved of the greatest value. Alternately in the guise of a fish-buyer or as a drunken loafer, he frequented places where correct news of our enemies' movements were to be gathered, and acted so successfully the part he had to play, that both the Germans and pro-German Norwegians frequently gave him their complete confidence, disclosed their plans, and even *asked* him to do certain things which I was most anxious to learn. When he left me in Hammerfest, in November, he broke down and cried like a child, and said he had never enjoyed himself so much in his life. Dear old E.! He was a man amongst men, with a great warm heart and the courage of the Vikings, and I place him in the category of my long-dead friends Jimmy Sutherland of Stromness, my boatman for eleven years in the Orkneys, and Roelef Van Staden, the Boer hunter, with whom I lived for a year in South Africa. But E. lives, and I hope one day we shall hunt ripa again and discourse on the great things of life.

Other interesting visitors to Hammerfest were the Lapps. The race is divided into two distinct branches. The Coast Lapps, mostly a hybrid race

of Lap-Norwegian origin, who are fishing people inhabiting the coast, and the pure Lapps of the high fjelds, who are very small, and essentially devoted to the reindeer. The former come in numbers to Hammerfest, and are much dependent for the commodities of life on European wares. They wear a picturesque national costume, and are in every way content to lead the lives of coast fishermen who do not go to the deep seas for their living. They bring in quantities of dried and salted fish of secondary quality, which they sell to the merchants, thus earning enough money for an existence, which is poor compared to that of the white population. They live in scattered villages of wood along the coast-line, and often far up into the fjords, and are a quiet, inoffensive race without national pride or worldly ambition. They seem to have nothing to do with the Hill Lapps, and do not intermarry with them.

The Fjeld Lapps, on the other hand, are a virile, independent race of little people. They are perhaps the oldest pure race in the world, and are synonymous with the Fins or Feans that migrated to Scotland in the early Christian era. They are few in actual numbers, and live principally on the herds of tame reindeer, which furnish them with the whole means of existence—food, clothes, shelter (tent coverings in summer) and what little money they require. These Fjeld Lapps are purely farmers of reindeer, which they keep in order with their active little dogs, and at certain seasons hunters of bear, wolf and ripa. They live solely on the produce of the wilderness, only coming very rarely into the towns to sell a few hides and horns, from

the sale of which I regret to say they often buy cogent spirit with which to get drunk. I was wandering up into the mountains one night when I heard sounds of carousal coming from behind a stone wall, and, looking over, saw three funny little Hill Lapps celebrating the occasion in a state of hilarity. They were not very drunk and only merry, so I induced them to allow me to accompany them into their hill camp, where I spent some hours studying them and their reindeer, and enjoyed some excellent reindeer milk and coffee.

The Hill Lapps spend the whole winter in the mountain station of Karajok, near the Russian frontier, where reindeer moss is abundant, and then migrate slowly in little parties, as the summer advances, towards the coast-line between Tromso and Hammerfest. Here in October they do a big "killing," and sell the carcases and hides on the coast, and then return into the interior, reaching Karajok again before Christmas.

The Lapps are generally regarded as purely nomadic people, living exclusively on the reindeer, but as a matter of fact a great number of small communities of them are settled on the fjords, lakes and rivers of northern Norway, and have no ostensible connection with reindeer, although in many cases they have a sort of vested interest in them. Some members of every tribe are genuine Fjeld Lapps, whilst others are fishermen, and somewhat dependent on the pure Norwegians and the Finns. Correctly speaking, the last-named race are inhabitants of Russian Finland and also the land on the Norwegian side of the Tana which

divides the two countries. Moreover, in certain districts, such as the Alten and the Lax Rivers, there are tribes of pure Finns which the Norwegians call "Kvaens," and these they separate from the pure Finns of Finmark, whom the Norwegians consider to be the original inhabitants of Finmark. The pure Finns, who number about 9000, originally came out of Finland, and retain the purity of their race by intermarrying, but, on the other hand, many of them have intermarried with river, lake and sea Lapps, in which both the Lapp and the Finn types predominate, and so much confusion arises in differentiating the various races. The characteristics of the pure Fjeld Lapps are, however, constant and unmistakable. They are of very short stature, with straight dark hair, eyes and complexion, and Mongolian features. Ethnologists tell us they are of the same stock as Finns and Esthonians, but this is somewhat difficult to believe, for their similarity to the Eastern Mongols and even the Northern Esquimaux is much more marked. The costume of some of the Coast and Hill Lapps is very picturesque. I lured one into my den to paint him. But how to prevent a passage of "the friends who were always with us" was the difficulty. I love animals, but not in this case with the enthusiasm of the Hon. Charles Rothschild and the Prince of Monaco. I did not desire "the gleesome fleasome thou" to pass unsolicited to "gleesome flealess me." So our interview was short and conversation distant, and he soon left when I refused to supply him with ardent spirits.

Some years ago the Prince of Monaco was here.

He is a scientific entomologist, and was studying the *pulicidæ*. Being anxious to ascertain whether the flea inhabiting the person of the High Fjeld Lapp was the same as that found on the Coast Lapp, he announced that he would give one kroner for every fine specimen of *pulex irritans* retained for science. The news spread like wild-fire, and Hammerfest swarmed with Lapps of every age and sex. Each Lapp that came to official headquarters felt that he carried on his own person a banking account running (and biting) to several hundred kroners. However, the first two original inhabitants of Finmark examined yielded such splendid results that no further hosts were required, and when this unwelcome news was announced a riot broke out that threatened serious consequences.

So the summer passed away, and as the expected U-boats had not yet arrived, I hoped to get away for a day or two up the coast and see either the Alten Fjord or the North Cape at close quarters. But better luck was in store. One day I was talking to the Chief of the Customs, and he informed me that on the following day Mr. Arthur Johnsen, who lived on an island called Rolfsö, about forty miles north of Hammerfest, would arrive, and that if I cared to hunt wild reindeer Mr. Johnsen would probably allow me to do so for a small fee. The island farmer duly arrived, and told me that there was, indeed, a herd of wild reindeer on his island, but that he had not seen them for some months, but that if I came to the island in early September he would furnish me with a local hunter, and that I should probably be able to find the deer in a day's journey from his home. This was excellent news.

The island was on the direct northern route of the mail steamers, and as a British Consul I had the right to stop the steamers where and when I pleased, so, after talking to the captain of one of them, I was dropped off the island at 5 a.m. on September 5th, and there found a rowing-boat, with Mr. Johnsen ready to take me to his little farmhouse at Rolfsöhavn.

It was a pretty spot, situated on a bright green flat beneath the towering mountains, and after an excellent breakfast of fresh fish, eggs and coffee served by his kindly wife and sister, I strolled out to the shingly beach, where numerous flocks of Oyster-Catchers, Curlew, Sandpipers and Little Stints were chasing the limpets and sandhoppers. These little birds were exceedingly tame, and allowed me to approach within a few yards. I was also interested to see a Hooded Crow "playing" with a female Merlin. The crow chased and twisted after the little Falcon, and then in turn the Merlin chased the Hoodie. There seemed to be no personal animosity in this game, which went on for quite a long time, and then, wearied of the fun, both birds perched on a rock together and each solemnly regarded the other. I had never seen such a thing before. About 6.30 came Erik the hunter, a powerful man about forty years of age, and after some short preparations we started up a winding path to ascend the mountain.

The going was at first easy, and then we descended to the coast-line and made our way for some five miles over a series of very rough boulders. When further progress along the coast seemed impossible, my guide said we must now ascend to the plateau

above. This entailed a straight uphill climb over very bad ground to a height of about 1500 feet. Being somewhat out of condition, I felt the effort, but once on the high ground the walking was better, and we progressed for another mile or two without seeing any sign, old or fresh, of reindeer. My guide now seemed somewhat tired, as he was only just recovering from the serious accident he had recently experienced in falling into the hold of a ship, so we halted for a while and had lunch. Then came another climb of about 500 feet, and we worked westward across the island towards another plateau overlooking the sea, which Erik said was known as a favourite resort of the deer. This entailed a long circuit that took us till three in the afternoon, when we must have walked from the house at least fifteen English miles. I was getting a bit tired, whilst my companion was completely "done," when we came at last to the ridge overlooking the sea. There was nothing in sight, nor had we seen a single fresh sign of deer, and my companion was quite at a loss to know where they had roamed. We lay down, had some more food, and discussed the problem before us. I could not spend another day on the mountains; was there no other ground we could work on the way home? "Well," said Erik, "there is just one place they may be, and that is in a small valley not many hundred yards to our right. Let us look there, and if we do not find them we must return home, for I am exhausted."

Accordingly we moved on. I was for the moment behind Erik, and glancing past him, suddenly saw a pair of large horns coming up a ridge right in

front. At once I pulled him to the ground. When he inquired the reason, I told him what I had seen, and like nearly all Norwegians, he was immediately thrown into a palsy of excitement. However, I got him at last to lie still and promise he would not move, and then, crawling forward, I saw three large reindeer males coming slowly up the hill from below. They were not more than sixty yards off, so I aimed at the best-headed one and gave him a shot through the shoulder, to which he dropped dead. I had scarcely reloaded the old Krag Jorgensen rifle when I spied three more adult stags climbing the hill to the right about a hundred and twenty yards away. The third animal seemed to carry very fine horns, so I fired at him, and he stood quite still, whilst the others galloped wildly uphill. As the wounded beast still remained on his feet, I gave him another bullet, which I afterwards found was unnecessary, and he at once collapsed.

Two other small herds of reindeer now suddenly appeared, climbing the hill to my left. There were about fifteen animals in each, and all, as far as I could see, were stags. They were about two hundred and fifty yards away, and I could easily have run and intercepted them, had I wished to do so, but my glass showed that there was no stag with better horns than those just killed, so I allowed them to pass upwards and on to the plateau behind.

The spot where I had killed the two reindeer was situated on a steep slope overlooking a quiet arm of the sea, and after grallocking the animals, Erik suggested that we should return home, and fetch the carcases on the following day by rowing

along the coast and dragging them down to the water edge. Accordingly we started on our long tramp home, which we reached after six hours' walking. The distance travelled all day could not have been less than thirty-two miles. After an excellent dinner and night's rest Erik, a small boy of twelve, and I rowed along the coast to the valley where I had killed the deer. We ascended the hillside and proceeded to cut the animals into pieces, which we placed in sacks for easy transport down to the boat. Whilst doing so, Erik became faint and unable to continue the work, for the injury to his ribs had been accentuated by our hard exercise on the previous day. I had therefore to do most of the skinning and cutting up myself.

Just as I finished this task I noticed five men ascending the hill beneath our position. "Those are fishermen coming to hunt reindeer," remarked Erik. "Well, perhaps we can make them useful," I suggested, but the words were hardly uttered when one of the men, carrying a rifle, looked up and saw us, when the whole lot at once took to their heels. Fearing the loss of such excellent transport, I dropped my knife and ran after them, shouting, "Come up here. I will give you meat," an argument which at last seemed to have its effect. The men stopped, and after explaining to them that I had killed two reindeer, and would give them a fore-quarter if they would assist me to carry the rest of the meat down to my boat, they joyfully accepted, and soon we had all the sacks safely transported down the hill and put on board.

We had just started to row home when to my joy I heard the throb of an engine, and in a few minutes

Arthur Johnsen turned up with his motor-boat and gave us a tow back to the farm, which we reached in little over an hour. The same evening I stopped the mail steamer by telephoning to the mainland, and in four hours reached Hammerfest, after a very pleasant little holiday. I took with me one whole reindeer as a gift to my excellent hostess, Froken Jansen, but after a fortnight of living almost exclusively on this poor meat I wished more than once I had not been so generous.

On the 10th of September I reported to the Legation in Christiania the arrival off Honningsvaag of the first German submarine, and was told that I was mistaken, and that the boat was an English one proceeding to Archangel. Two days later I reported it again, and knew that my information was correct, as certain Norwegian fishermen whom I had asked to inform me of such an event, had both seen and talked to the crews on board, and they assured me that the men were undoubtedly Germans. Again I was told not to send incorrect messages. Four days later, the 16th, two Norwegian ships, *Dania* and *Knut Hilde*, were sunk off Honningsvaag, and our troubles began. From this date until December 1st, when it became dark all day and impossible for the U-boats to operate, some five German submarines continued to sink Norwegian ships almost daily between Honningsvaag and the Murman coast. The Russian torpedo boats which had charge of this field of operations were both scarce and inefficient. On October 8th two U-boats coolly went up and shelled the wireless station at Tsipnavolok on the Murman coast. Whilst so engaged a Russian gunboat came up

and opened fire on them, and had quite a little scrap with the underwater boats, which had decidedly the best of it, for they submerged at last undefeated. This did not prevent the Russian captain from reporting that he had sunk both the U-boats (*vide* English papers), for which he received medals and decorations. Both U-boats appeared the same evening off Vardo.

A considerable number of Norwegian vessels were sunk by U-boats in September and October, and it is not too much to say that in most cases these vessels could easily have escaped disaster if their captains had not been so obstinate, and had come for information, had proceeded east through the waters of the territorial limit, or joined our convoys. Sometimes it even looked as if they did not care as long as they got the insurance money for the ships, for they well knew that the Germans would in every case safeguard the crews, even in most instances towing the ship boats close to the coast after sinking the vessels. When dealing with the crews of their enemies they acted with their usual inhumanity. Any English, American or Roumanian crews were simply cast off in their boats in the Polar Sea at night, generally many miles from land, and left to reach safety if they could. The men of more than one boat were completely lost, and others died from exposure as soon as they reached land. Fortunately, however, the precautions taken by our Admiralty were so good that we lost few vessels, our only casualties being the *G. Y. Short* (American), October 2nd, the *Turgai* (Russian), October 2nd, *Astoria* (American), October 9th, *Bardeby* (English), October 10th (which lost one

boat with eleven men), *Bistrita* (Roumanian), October 11th, *Gardepee* (English), October 16th, *Oolr* (English), October 26th. The crews of most of these passed through my hands, and there was much work day and night attending to their affairs and sending them south.

One October morning a little incident occurred which was somewhat annoying, though not without an element of humour. About 10 a.m. there was a knock at my door, and there entered a small, rough-looking Norwegian sea captain, who had evidently, even at this early hour, been engaged in the worship of Bacchus. The following conversation then took place—

"Well, what can I do for you?"

"I have just arrived from Trondhjem with a cargo of salt, and as I am in a hurry, I want papers to obtain bunker coal to return there this evening."

"Not so fast, my friend. What kind of salt have you delivered here, German or English?"

"It was English."

"You are quite sure?"

"Yes."

"To whom did you deliver it?"

"N. and Co."

"Where did you obtain the salt and of what firm?"

"In Trondhjem."

"But of what firm?"

At this he hesitated, and on my stating that he could in no case obtain the permit unless he told me, he mentioned the name.

"Well, before I can give you a permit for bunker coal, I shall have to make inquiries, so return here

to-morrow morning at this hour, and if all is in order you shall have the permit."

At this the captain broke into a storm of rage, and began to abuse me and the British Government, whom he called "cursed policemen interfering with Norwegians engaged in legitimate trade in their own country," and acted in such a manner that I felt sure something was wrong, and as he would not go away, I pushed him out of the room and locked the door, from the far side of which he continued his vituperation for a while. Now N. and Co. were very decent people, but secretly pro-German, so I telegraphed to our Consul in Trondhjem and asked if the firm of N. and Co. in that town sold English or German salt. The reply came in three hours, "German salt only."

Punctually at 10 o'clock next morning an aroma of public house announced the advent of the captain, this time both drunk and quarrelsome. In a voice where emotion strove with unsweetened Aquavite he announced that I could now give him the necessary permit. My reply was, "Not on any account. You lied to me. That was German salt; and you can get out of the room as fast as you like."

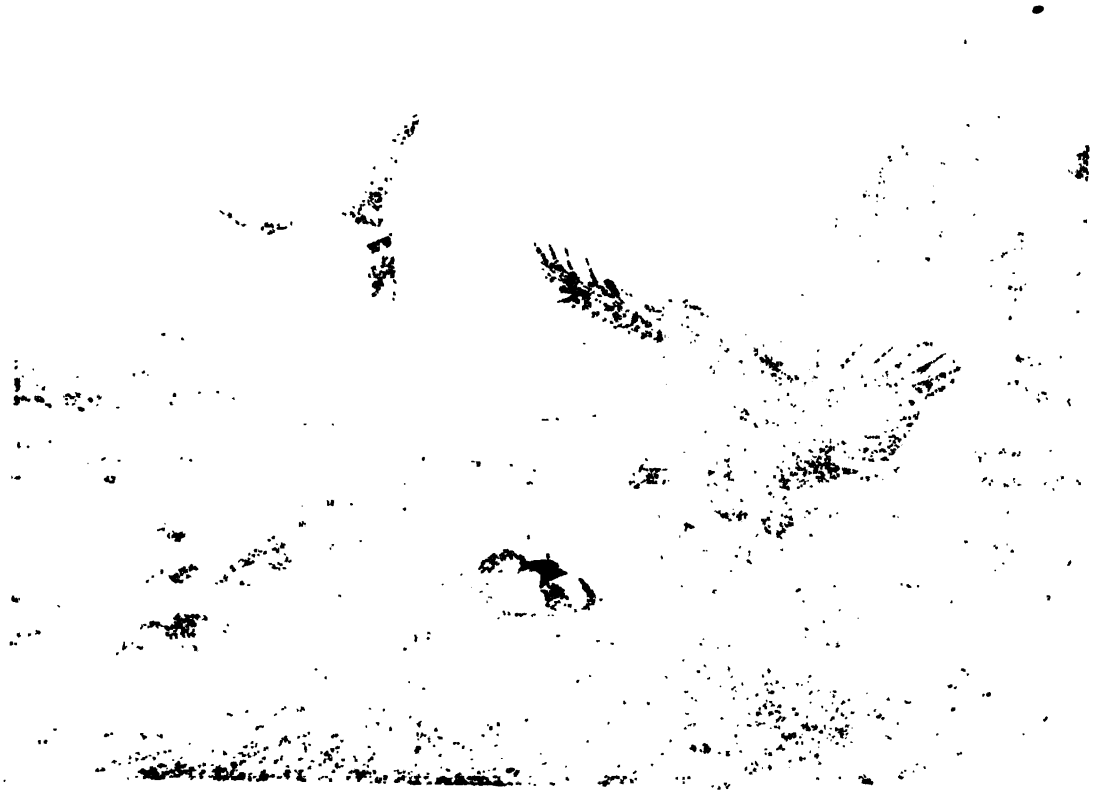
At this his face was contorted with rage, and he screamed, "I shall make you give me the coal."

A sort of football scrimmage then began, my idea being to get him out of the room as quickly as possible. Very soon I had him out on the landing at the top of the staircase, by which time his passion had risen to fever heat. Then in a moment he seemed to lose control of himself, and shouted, "Now I will make you, you cursed

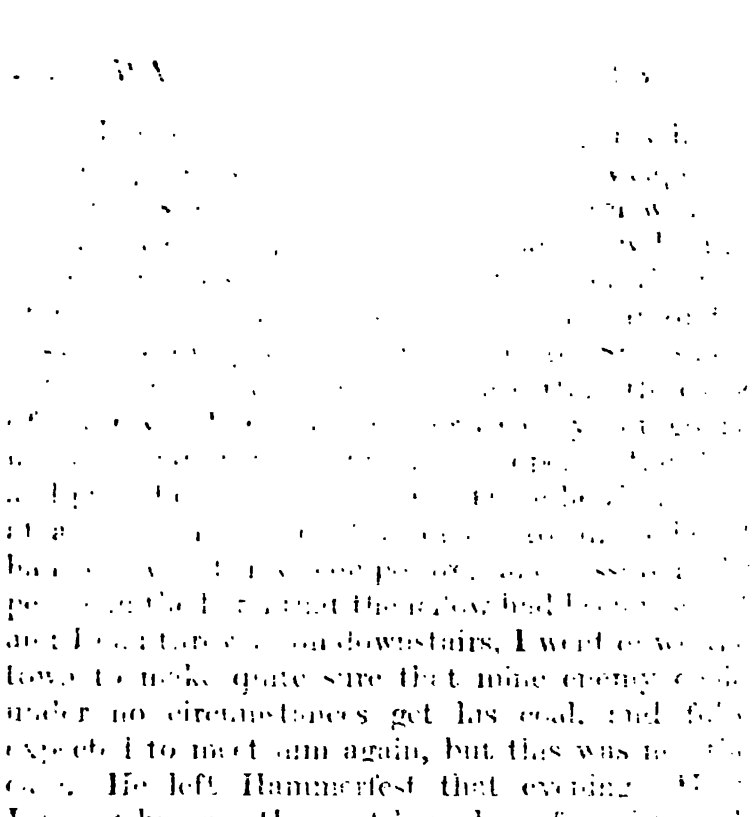
Englishman," at the same time diving his hands into his pockets as if searching for some weapon.

This was a bit too much, so I hit him with all my might on the point of the jaw, and saw him go down the stairs all in a heap. He struck the wall at an angle with a thud, and then rolled to the passage below, just as the people in the Spiessalon, with anxious faces, came out to ascertain the cause of the row. For a moment or two my antagonist lay still, and then got up slowly, opened the door and passed out into the snow. There he zig-zagged at a crawl in the direction of the town. When I had recovered my composure, and assured the people in the hotel that the fellow had been insolent and I had thrown him downstairs, I went down the town to make quite sure that mine enemy could under no circumstances get his coal, and fully expected to meet him again, but this was not the case. He left Hammerfest that evening. How, I do not know. He must have been forced to sail, unless he induced some of his German friends (who were here numerous) to give him some supplies of fuel. I expected there might be a bit of a row about this incident, but I never heard of him again. At any rate I hope he was sore for some days afterwards.

This was only one of the little *contretemps* that may occur any day in the life of a Consul in out-of-the-way places. There was only one matter that I was really frightened about, and that was that I should be asked to perform a marriage. Should such a misfortune have occurred, I do not know what I should have done, beyond reading the marriage service and giving a blessing. One



THE MOST NORTHERLY POINT IN EUROPE.



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THE MOST NORTHERLY POINT IN EUROPE.

day two sheepish-looking individuals turned up, and by their demeanour I feared the worst was about to happen. But no, they were nice, inoffensive creatures, and had married already, and only wanted a passport to England, which I could not give them, so I sent them with a letter to Mr. Wardrup in Bergen, and trust they got through safely.

On December 1st complete darkness set in, and the U-boats disappeared, one being lost on a rock close to Hammerfest, so I settled up my affairs, and the work for which I had been specially detailed being finished, I took the mail steamer and went south.

Travel in the North Sea in 1916 was neither a safe business nor an unmixed joy. The week previously the Germans had sunk two of the mail-boats to Newcastle, and now the *Venus* was going across on what it was expected would probably be the last direct voyage from Bergen. As I went to say farewell to a certain German-Norwegian merchant in Hammerfest who had been very civil to me in obtaining information of value, I found him packing up a box of excellent cigars. "Here is a little gift for you," he remarked, "and let me give you a piece of advice. Last night I was in the Café (the regular meeting-place in Hammerfest of German agents), and I heard two men talking about you. They were aware of your departure, and said that your capture was necessary for *something you did last year*. So be careful, and above all do not go home by Bergen." This afforded me some amusement, for I was quite aware of the incident to which he referred, and resolved not to be caught napping.

After five weary days I arrived at Bergen, and

then walked round the docks to spend the night at Smeby's Hotel, which for years had been the resort of English people, and where I did not expect to meet any of the foreign element. Imagine my disgust when I found the place lit up with electric light and a gold-braided German hall porter installed to greet the visitors. On inquiry I found that there was not a bed to be had in the town owing to the recent fire, but as I only required shelter for one night, they would rig up something in a box-room. After hiding my bag and any source of identification, I signed the register as "Dr. Stuart," and descended to the dining-room to have supper. I had hardly seated myself when a pleasant-faced man, whom at first I took to be a Norwegian, came and occupied the chair next to me and began to talk. He asked where I had come from, and about my reasons for being in Norway at such a time, when, lying freely, I told him I was a Scotch doctor taking a holiday, and had been fishing up north near Trondhjem, and that my name was Stuart. I then waxed enthusiastic about the joys of salmon fishing, speaking with a broad Scotch accent. "Oh," he replied, "I thought you were Consul Millais"; at which I laughed, and said there was a man on the steamer of that name, but that he had gone on to Christiania, where I was myself going the following day. After this conversation languished, and presently he got up and left the room, evidently taking no further interest in me, but not before I had noted that his clothes and boots were obviously German.

Next morning I went to see my old friend the harbour master—a man who knew as much

about German spies as most people. Until December 1916 there were some fifteen regular German agents resident in Bergen who did nothing but report the arrival and departure of ships from this port, and send messages by wireless to the submarines waiting outside. The Norwegian Government were in terror of the Central Powers, and, fearful of taking strong measures, had allowed these pests to destroy their own shipping to a great extent, but at last, in the face of public opinion, backed by pressure from the Allied Governments, they took measures, and informed these gentry that their presence was no longer welcome in Norway. Consequently the docks were not so closely watched as heretofore, though one or two spies still existed there in close disguise. My friend the harbour master knew all these men. and I got him to signal to me from the ship (to which I had already sent my luggage) that the coast was clear, and then, well wrapped up to escape recognition, I strolled down to the landing-stage.

The whole place seemed deserted, except for one poor woman accompanied by two small children, who was sitting on a box crying bitterly. She looked like an Englishwoman, so I addressed her and asked if I could be of any assistance, when she answered me in pleasant broad Scotch. It appeared that she was the wife of a prominent Roumanian minister, and had recently fled from Bucharest, when it seemed the Germans were about to enter and capture the whole country. She had been a whole month on the journey, *via* Petrograd and Haparanda in Lapland, and often half starved and ill-treated on the way. Now at

last she had reached what she thought was safety, only to find that in all probability she and her children would be drowned or taken prisoner. Courage for the moment had failed her, and all the future seemed black. I endeavoured to cheer her up, and promised to look after the children if anything serious happened, so she presently smiled, dried her tears and helped me to get her very heavy box on my back, and thus accompanied me on to the ship.

We left in the darkness, some hours after our appointed time, the only other passengers being three jolly Norwegian captains (all of whose ships had been torpedoed, and now going to get other vessels in England). About 8 a.m., when well out to sea, there was a terrific crash on the side of the ship, and I thought we were in for it. I ran to the lady's cabin, and telling her not to be alarmed, but to dress the children, then went up on deck, and found to my relief that we had only charged into the wreckage of some ship that had recently been torpedoed. When daylight came we had some anxious hours, but nothing further happened to spoil our voyage, so after another night at sea, we reached Newcastle without incident. I can hardly describe the joy of that poor Scotch girl on landing in England. It was a sight to make one's heart glad, and no doubt she had a happy reunion with her family, which she had not seen for eleven years.

Soon after this all passenger communication with Norway ceased. Such travellers as found it necessary to go to the Scandinavian countries and Russia were carried by one of His Majesty's destroyers.

## CHAPTER XI

### FEALAR, 1918

THE forest of Fealar, the property of the Duke of Athole, lies in a large amphitheatre between the old deer-grounds of Mar and Athole. It is a huge pocket, bounded on the north by Glen Bruar and Gaick, on the west by Forest Lodge, Athole, and on the east by the main sanctuary of Mar. To the south, beyond the great Glen Mohr, the forest of Invercauld just touches it, whilst to the south-east there are the large sheep-grounds of Glenfernate, which embrace some of the finest grassy glens in the centre of Scotland. All around, the main ridges practically form the boundaries, and from these descend numerous burns, and in this punchbowl of some 18,000 acres are situated fine hollows and corries where abundant grass is to be found and numerous hinds make their permanent home. The Lodge lies in the centre of the forest at 1700 feet, and from here numbers of little rivers move towards the north-west and empty into the Tarf and Tilt, which last debouch from a small lake (Loch Tilt) in the forest itself. Altogether it is a pleasant, easily-walked forest, with its farthest points at no greater distance than five miles from the Lodge, whilst the heather itself is for the most part well burnt, and contains little "haggy" ground, so distressful to the sportsman. There is

quite a good stock of grouse on the place, which are seldom "hard" shot, owing to the necessity of keeping the forest quiet in the later part of the season, whilst Ptarmigan are abundant, notably on Ben Ivan and Carn-na-Righ (I saw a flock of two hundred one rough day), though kept somewhat in check by the Golden Eagles that constantly hunt them. In the early part of the season few stags make their home in Fealar, as it is essentially a "late" hind-forest, but when the big harts work in from Mar early in October it is swarming with deer, and attracts many of the best stags from this famous forest when the wind goes to the north-west. These old fellows know the marches only too well, for a single hind moving in Fealar is enough to set them travelling for home at the slightest alarm, even if in retreat they have to go down-wind. Mar itself, perhaps the finest, as well as the largest, forest in Scotland, is seldom "hard" shot, and contains an immense number of stags. The poorer quality work north to the edges of Glenfiddick, Glenfeshie, Gaick and Rothiemurchus ground, but the best stags summer just over the ridge of Fealar, at the heads of the numerous burns from which the main Dee valley receives its waters. They work westwards, looking for hinds when the season advances, remaining for about a month on Fealar; then, recrossing the ridges, they descend to the main Dee valley for the winter, whilst a few cross over Fealar and winter in the Athole forest.

In the autumn of 1918 my uncle, Mr. Melville Gray, with Mr. John Calder and Mr. Wedderburn, rented the forest of Fealar, and invited me to spend the last fortnight. Owing to the depletion of

labour, due to the war, the forest was heavily understaffed. There was only one stalker, MacDougall, one good pony and a shepherd, to do all the work of bringing in stags and cutting them up, whilst a keeper and a boy lent additional assistance in dispatching the carcases, so generally we all had to lend a hand at these onerous tasks, whilst for the most part the actual hunting had to be done by the sportsman working alone. Even without local knowledge, I soon found that stalking alone in such a forest as Fealar presented no grave difficulties. The winds were, for the most part, constant, and seldom tricky, whilst the only task was learning the confines of each beat so as not to interfere with one's brother sportsman. This small trouble, however, was soon overcome by the aid of a large-scale map.

Fealar Lodge is situated high up amongst the hills some twenty-two miles from Pitlochry, and its inaccessibility has made it little known, but adds much to its charm. An old fellow named Milburn drove me in his dogcart from Pitlochry, with one halt at Straloch, up the long Glenfernate Glen and over the mountains by a rough mountain road till we descended by tortuous ways to the Forest Lodge. Even then he had to return for the night to his home at Straloch, so his gallant horse did not less than forty-eight miles that day, an unusual effort for the Highlands.

The following day (September 29th) my uncle and I went north to the hills above Loch Tilt to fetch in a small stag shot the previous day by Mr. Wedderburn. We took with us one Sandy, a local shepherd, and a pony to carry the deer, and had not proceeded

far when, spying ahead, I found numerous small groups of hinds on the hillsides to the north. The dead stag lay on the slope of Corrie-na-Cairn, and putting my glass on its rocky face, I saw a herd of some thirty hinds lying composedly there, with another lot of more than fifty higher up amongst the stony ridges. It was most unlikely that there would not be "a hart of grease" with them at this season, and further search revealed a good nine-pointer lying in the midst of the lower hinds. When we arrived at some sheltering mounds on the lower slopes, the difficulty of getting at this stag was manifest. The wind blew straight down the hill, the line to the north-west was impossible, as the ground was quite open, whilst to the south the main valley of the Tilt was blocked by further herds of deer. There only remained, therefore, the straight uphill advance, rendered difficult enough by the fact that it was necessary to cross two wide marshes of pale yellow grass, which would be within full view of all those watching eyes above. My uncle insisted that I should take the stalk, so with some misgivings I commenced a long and difficult crawl of about a quarter of a mile. The first marsh was quite as wet as I expected, and I was soon soaked from head to boots, but on surveying the hinds above I saw they had not moved. A short space of rough, burnt ground then gave some relief and slight cover, and then I entered the second marsh. Over this I went inch by inch, since I was now within 600 yards of the lowest deer, and could not fail to be somewhat noticeable. But it is wonderful what you can do in face of deer if you only go slowly enough and never raise your head, so this

obstacle, too, was safely surmounted. Now the ground was more broken into little mounds of heather and stone, but even here I constantly came into view of some of the hinds, and as I approached within 400 yards, the most intense caution had to be exercised. At last I saw a higher ridge only 100 yards ahead, where, if I could reach it, I should be at any rate within a long shot of my stag. To pass this short space was perhaps the most difficult piece of stalking, but with patience and flat crawling it was accomplished.

Peering over the ridge I saw that six of the nearest hinds were up feeding within 200 yards of my position. To the left the ground was quite open, whilst to the right other hinds came into view. I got out my glass, and found the stag lying quietly at about 300 yards distance. It was a long shot, but I decided to take it as soon as he rose to his feet.

With the remarkable accuracy of the modern high-velocity rifle it is only necessary to get a perfectly comfortable position to ensure success at a long shot, so I moved about until such a spot was found, and waited for the stag to rise. Soon he began to roar, answering the stags higher up the glen, and at a particularly loud challenge from the hills above he gave one glance upwards and sprang to his feet. I took a very steady aim, and on the shot saw him stumble and walk slowly forward; a second shot missed, but the third, taking him well behind the shoulder, laid him dead on the spot.

When my uncle, who had been much interested in the stalk, came up, we had lunch and packed our stag, a good beast of sixteen stone, on the pony

and sent him home. I now ascended to the top of the range, hoping to see something of two fine stags that had passed out of the valley in the direction of Mar at the shots, and also to survey the big valley over the Tarf where a large stag had been heard roaring the previous evening. However, just as I reached the open crest a heavy snowstorm came on and soon enveloped all things in darkness. I waited two hours, hoping it would clear, and then descended to the valley, where I found that Sandy had returned, so we loaded up the stag shot by Wedderburn and returned home.

*September 30th.*—My indefatigable uncle, who is seventy-three years of age and yet a splendid walker, suggested a visit to-day to the far ground above the Tarf valley, which a good stag was known to frequent with his hinds. About 10.30 we found him on the ridge of the Mar march, and after watching him for some time, he moved still further south, and lay down with all his harem in full view of all the ground below. The wind was north-east, and so left nothing but the inevitable uphill crawl. The ground was, on the whole, more broken than that I experienced two days before, but there were certain hollows on the upper parts of the ridge which it was not possible to spy from below, and one of these, in fact, proved my undoing. A crawl over one marsh in full view was soon accomplished safely, and then, the deer being out of sight above, I had nothing to do but walk straight uphill to within some 450 yards of the resting animals. Then I took a short rest, got the rifle out, and began to crawl upwards to a small mound from which I hoped to get a long shot, or, at any rate, study

future developments. I was, in fact, in the act of creeping up to this obstacle, when suddenly out of a little pocket up sprang a hind and calf about 100 yards to my left. At the same moment eight hinds appeared on the sky-line to the left, and at once noticed the startled deer, and made a sudden move, which I knew would be noticed by the big herd of deer in front and above me. Accordingly I moved upwards rapidly, and lay on the mound expecting to get in a long shot. By the fraction of a second, however, I was just too late. All the hinds at some 400 yards distance had run together and massed round the stag, who, being so near the march, had no intention of halting to study causes of alarm, but immediately ran over the edge of the hill and out of sight. After this disappointment a long walk round the tops and above the Loch Tilt Glen proved a failure as far as stags were concerned, and we found nothing except large herds of hinds.

*October* 1*st*.—I went south to-day to Glen Mohr, between the mountains of Ben Ivan and Carn-na-Righ, to fetch in a stag shot by Calder on the previous day. On the top of Carn-na-Righ was a nice ten-pointer, but I decided to leave him alone, as he looked like a young and growing stag, and in Glen Mohr only found some eight unshootable beasts. Having sent home Calder's stag, Sandy Kennedy, the shepherd, and I climbed to the top of Ben Ivan and descended Glen Beig without seeing anything of interest. However, in the home beat above the Fealar burn I discovered a big herd of deer, quite two hundred hinds with two excellent stags, a nine- and a ten-pointer. After a long wait to allow them to feed out of the glen to some broken

flats on the top, we at last advanced and got within 100 yards of the hinds. Both stags were roaring well, and I felt certain of a shot, when suddenly a dense mist descended and both stags ceased roaring. This was bad luck, and though I kept cutting into various groups of hinds within thirty yards of them, I did not again see either of the stags before darkness set in and operations for the day were over.

*October 2nd.*—Out for the first time with MacDougall, the stalker, on the best beat. We surprised a fine ten-pointer on topping the shoulder of the hill above the Lodge, and as he would be likely to settle again soon in our ground if not followed at once, we worked south round the Dualter Glen, and at last decided to go for a big nine-pointer that was roaring well and seemed quite settled up near the Mar march. We had, in fact, ascended more than half of the steep face above the burn, when, looking back, we saw the ten-pointer we had moved early in the morning with his hinds on the other side of the burn we had lately crossed. MacDougall said that this stag was by far the better one, and had a good head, which was evident, so we retraced our steps, made a fresh stalk over easy, broken ground, and came within 180 yards, at which distance I killed him. This stag carried a good head even for Fealar, all the points being long and black with a nice rough horn. A long walk round Loch Tilt disclosed no good stags, but several inferior ones.

*October 3rd.*—Away to the south only saw hinds and two small stags.

*October 4th.*—Again on the good ground with Mac-

Dougall. We found no good beast till midday, when we discovered an excellent stag with a good head close to the top of the Little Cairn, within 100 yards of the Mar march. Both he and his few hinds seemed very kittle; they had doubtless only just come in from Mar, and were anxious to return there, but the stag kept roaring and rounding them up, so that when a hind showed a disposition to move he always headed her back. The wind was good and steady, so we worked up from below, and I knew I should have to shoot quickly as soon as I came in view. The deer had already run together, and were just about to go, whilst the stag himself was more than half covered by a hind, when I took a very quick shot. At any rate I thought I had missed him, and as he galloped away, luckily clear of hinds, I made a fortunate shot and knocked him over stone dead. The first shot had hit rather low, and doubtless he would not have gone far had I not fired a second time. This stag carried a very fine rough head of eleven points, 33½ inches long, which is good measurement for Scotland. In the afternoon we found a desirable eleven-pointer just over the Mar march, and as his hinds were working in to Fealar, we made sure he would follow sooner or later. From a high perch on the side of the mountain we watched him lording it over an immense concourse of deer on the flat below, but after a three-hour wait he had not shifted his position, so we went home cold and hungry.

*October 5th.*—Off early this morning with a shepherd boy to ascend Ben Ivan, where I hoped to find a stag shot two days before in the mist by Wedderburn, and to drag it down to the pony path.

It was a lovely day, the first we had had for weeks, and ascending the Fealar burn I saw herds of deer on both sides of the glen. Both these lots could not fail to see me, and moved upwards to the ridges of the hills, but seemed by no means alarmed, as we kept steadily moving. Presently I sat down and spied them both. That on the right consisted of a big eight-pointer with about eighty hinds, and those on the left, which seemed much shyer, as they always were near the Mar march, were twenty-five hinds, led by a noble-looking stag with a very good head. The horns of this stag were exceptional, so I considered the possibility of stalking him if he would allow me to continue on my route until the hill shut him out from view. Deer were always very shy on this particular ridge, as there was little or no feeding there, so I did not quite expect such good luck as that they would stay in their present position. Yet the stag had such a good head it was worth while having a try, even if I had to follow him for an hour or two and he did not leave our ground.

Accordingly we resumed our journey in full view of the deer, and continued up the glen for another half a mile, during which the hinds watched me closely all the time, only moving slowly uphill until a rounded shoulder of the hill completely hid them from view. Then I went straight uphill towards the Mar march, until I thought I was about on their level, and cut back straight upward towards the point where I had last viewed them.

All went well until I began to surmount the rounded shoulder, which was very bare, when I detected some brown spots below and to my left;

these spots proved to be six hinds, all lying chewing the cud, with heads facing downhill. My position was somewhat exposed, but I knew I should be able to crawl past them if they did not rise. Leaving Willie Milburn, the shepherd boy, with orders not to move until he heard a shot, I now crawled forward for two or three hundred yards, and saw in front a low heather ridge which I felt sure would be within shot of my deer if they had not moved on over the top. The hinds below were quite quiet, so I soon passed them easily, and gradually wormed my way up to the coveted point. Looking over the top with rifle in position I saw all the hinds within eighty yards and looking straight at me. The stag's head only showed over the top of some rocks to the left, and seeing they were certain to bolt, I took a careful shot at him and missed. As good luck would have it he galloped straight uphill, giving me a second shot, when I planted a bullet just in the right place, and the noble beast fell to rise no more. That is always a moment of expectancy when we walk up to a fallen stag which we know carries a good head. Is it going to be as good or even better than we expect? Generally some failure in the points detracts from the coveted royal and we have only got a good ten- or eleven-pointer. Now, as I stood over the fallen beast, I realised I had killed a royal, and a good one too, with nice thick horns 33½ inches long, and excellent back tops, all of which means so much in the shape of a head.

Willie and I dragged the stag down to the burn, where the pony could easily load it. Here I gralloched it, had lunch and crossed into Glen

Beig. Then it took a good hour to climb the steep face of Ben Ivan, and another to search for Wedderburn's stag, which we could not find.[1] On the top I saw lots of Ptarmigan and four nice stags, but they were on the Mar ground, so, feeling virtuous, I let them alone. Coming home I found the same eight-pointer, now with a hundred hinds, on the Fealar hill, but although I stalked him and got close in, I considered him as being unworthy even for the larder.

The following Sunday, Monday and Tuesday were hopeless for stalking, owing to a heavy gale, floods of rain and dense mist.

*October 7th.*—The mist was still dense on all the hill-tops, but I went south-west to the slopes on Carn-na-Righ, as there was just a chance of finding a stag on the mist edge where it could be seen. Soon after leaving the road and moving up the face of the mountain I heard a stag whose roar was so loud and low-pitched that I knew he must be an old fellow. The wind was here blowing straight downhill, and after working up, until viewing was possible, I just made out three hinds grazing slowly uphill. The stag soon roared just beyond them, and I had hopes he would sooner or later come down to these hinds, or that they were the outliers of a bigger herd.

After waiting half an hour, during which the hinds moved further and further into the mist, I crawled after them and kept them just in sight at

[1] As a matter of fact it was not found until 1919, for Mr. Wedderburn completely lost himself that evening, and landed up in the Dee valley, where he spent the night in a shepherd's hut, only returning next day.

THE BEST-HORNED STAG SELDOM GETS THE FINEST

[illegible] . . . now with a hind [illegible] but although I [illegible] I considered him as [illegible] [illegible]der.

[illegible] following Sunday, Monday and T[illegible] [illegible] to stalking owing to a heavy [illegible] and a[illegible]

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THE BEST-HORNED STAG SELDOM GETS THE HINDS.

about eighty yards. It was ticklish work, as they frequently stopped grazing and looking back in my direction. So it was only possible to creep forward slowly when their heads were down. At last I saw the horns of the stag in the mist, which, lifting slightly for a moment, just disclosed his shadowy form. It was, therefore, now or never, so I let go at what seemed the body of the animal. At the shot the stag rushed downhill, a sure sign of a hit, and coming into better light I got in a second bullet behind the shoulder and finished him. He proved to be a large eight-pointer with a strong and wide head (32 inches); and so home early to tea.

*October 8th.*—Another day on the home beat with MacDougall. In the morning we found a nine-pointer above the Dualter burn and got into him nicely when I made a bad miss at 120 yards. On crossing to the high ground along the Mar march we looked back and spied four big lots of deer above the Mach-na-Dovie burn. In the centre herd was a fine large eleven-pointer, so we at once retraced our steps and worked round and above the deer till it was easy to drop down through a marsh to within 130 yards of the stag we had marked. When he came into sight I fear I was somewhat careless in taking position, as lying in a swamp, the rushes obscured a complete view of the stag. However, the resulting miss was inexcusable. All the deer now galloped downhill to cross the burn at the foot and ascend the far face, and in doing so our stag had to go out of sight into a deep gully, which gave us time to run about a hundred yards downhill and expect a very long shot. As the hinds climbed up the face and the stag came into

view MacDougall remarked, "I think he is too far." "Well, I don't know," I replied. "I am going to have a shot." Allowing merely an ordinary full sight, though the distance was a good 300 yards, I pressed the trigger, and the bullet struck just to the right of the stag's neck. Throwing out the fired cartridge I tried again, and the stag fell head over heels off the path, got up again, ran another few yards and collapsed. It was a satisfactory shot, but hardly wiped out my two bad misses. The stag had long horns, 33 inches, and eleven points, but the brows and bays were somewhat inferior.

As we kept the other three herds in view, for they had now massed together in one scattered group of some two hundred animals, we noticed that the only other large stag, a nine-pointer, was a fine animal, and worth shooting, so, having grallochedour stag, we followed, and had a most delightful stalk of about half a mile, crawling up the side of a burn until we could get no further, as the deer were all scattered on the open face in front of us. The moving of large herds of deer at this season always means constant excitement, for several fresh stags had come in, and were busy trying to steal groups of hinds from the one master stag.

At first this master stag kept far from us, driving out four of the new-comers, but in time he worked back to the centre of the main body of the hinds, and was at last about 170 yards from our position. As the light was beginning to fail I resolved to try him, and the result was a bull's eye through the heart. He ran, as usual, about thirty yards and then rolled over dead. He was a grand heavy beast, but one top was spoilt by ending abruptly.

*October 9th.*—To shoot an ordinary stag at this season of the year in a good Highland forest is an easy matter, but to secure a really good specimen with a good head often requires hard physical exercise and some patience. Somehow I expected to find that good one to-day at the head of the big corrie on Dualter, where there was splendid grazing, for from here into Mar there was a regular road made by the big fellows as they came to look for Fealar's hinds at this season. A walk of about two miles brought me to the shoulder, which viewed this large punchbowl, and I was not disappointed when I heard a perfect chorus of roars proceeding from the high, grassy slopes close to the Mar march. For two days the wind had been right—south-west—and had brought the best stags in. The glass revealed five good stags striving for the possession of the hinds and creating the usual turmoil and constant watchfulness on the part of one who appeared to be the master stag—a big black fellow with at least eleven or twelve points. He was worth going to some trouble for, so I made light of the long circuit and stiff climb up the face of the mountain which it was necessary to make to ensure a position down-wind and above the herd. Having arrived near the summit, I came suddenly on a fine stag with six hinds that were just coming in from Mar, and which could not have been viewed from below. It was a somewhat unfortunate *contretemps*, as in their swift retreat down-wind the deer I was stalking may have caught a glimpse of them. At any rate, when after an hour I arrived at the pass where I had hoped to intercept the master stag, it was more than a little

disappointing to see the whole herd working slowly over the ridge in front of me and crossing the march. Of course, the big fellow looked better than ever immediately he touched Naboth's Vineyard, but then they always do under such circumstances, and I had reluctantly to seat myself and watch his gradual disappearance.

It was now nearly twelve o'clock, and I had spent a good part of the day in this unsuccessful stalk, so I picked up the rifle and walked rapidly south along the march for two miles towards Loch Tilt, till I came to the "Little Cairn," where I found a large herd of deer with what appeared to be a fine stag lying in their midst. I could not see him very well, but as his horns seemed to be large, I crawled to within 300 yards, when a further inspection proved that his head was not good enough.

Whilst inspecting the herd I now saw two other stags, both big beasts, come in from Mar and stand on the ridge of the steep hill about a quarter of a mile directly ahead. They appeared to offer an easy stalk, so I retreated a short distance and eventually came down on them from above. I took a side shot at the largest stag and one at the neck of the second beast as he ran, and both fell at once. Whilst reloading, the first stag rose to his feet again and hobbled round a corner, but as he seemed to be done for I did not fire again until he was going over the ridge, and then hit him again, I think too low. I now ran, as I thought, to intercept him from getting down into a rocky gully, where it would be difficult to recover the carcase, and in doing so completely lost the wounded beast, who must have turned uphill and crossed

on to Mar. At any rate, a further search for an hour yielded no trace of the animal, which, with regret, I was compelled to leave. The stag thus lost must have been a very large one, as the smaller of the two which I now gralloched, weighed, on getting it home, 16 stone 12 lbs.

The day was getting on, so, after a hurried lunch, I made for the home beat and worked up the burn, where deer were to be seen in all directions, but nothing exceptional being in view I passed on to the west towards the Tilt, above which a big stag was challenging loudly. Here the ground was broken into grassy hillocks, and as nothing came in the way, I succeeded in walking right up to the roaring stag, till I saw his horns suddenly appearing within seventy yards. He was close to the pony path and within a mile and a half of the Lodge, so, deciding to shoot him, I lay down, and when he showed put a bullet in behind his shoulders.

*October 10th.*—There being many stags to be brought in, I took it easy in the morning, and went out in the afternoon for a stroll up the Fealar burn. Here, at the head, I found two lots of hinds, each with a stag, and stalked both to within 150 yards, but as neither of the stags seemed exceptional, I retreated, and came home to tea at an early hour.

*October 12th.*—The last day, and a heavy mist on all the high tops. First I went up the Fealar burn, and then took the hill to the east, intending to visit the big punchbowl once more. Whilst climbing the face of Gealcharn somehow I must have circled too much to the right, for after half an hour's walk I found myself over a valley in which I thought was the Dualter burn, with a deep-voiced

stag roaring on the hill opposite and within 200 yards. I was in the act of stooping low to commence a crawl when suddenly I noticed two men doing exactly the same thing about fifty yards to my right. It was evident that the mist had deceived me, and I was about a mile off my beat, and so, having apologised to the stalkers, I retreated up the hill and re-ascended Gealcharn.

Whilst going along the slope I suddenly heard a loud bellow in the mist immediately above me, and at once lay down and awaited developments. As nothing appeared I crawled uphill, and then saw six hinds looking anxiously about. Soon they retreated further into the mist, and I followed them. Then for a moment evolved the stag, a fine beast with a good head. He ran forward, evidently slightly alarmed. I just got a glimpse of his form, and so fired and heard the bullet strike, but half an hour's search in the mist revealed nothing, though I had hopes the animal might be found another day. Arrived at the punchbowl at the top of Alt-an Buidh Ghil I saw there one fine stag, which somehow got a puff of my wind and went straight on uphill into Mar without stopping. The main glen revealed nothing but a few hinds, so I crossed and climbed the hill of Stron-a-Boididh, and kept along the Mar march till I reached my favourite spying-point, the edge of the steep cliff above the flats. The mist now began to lift, and I sat for awhile watching the deer on the Mar flats below, and the usual herd that dotted the slopes above the Geal na Caillich Buidhe and the green slopes beyond. The steep hill where I sat was seamed with numerous paths and the tracks of

travelling stags coming into Fealar, and I was a little disappointed not to see any moving on the face. At this time of year stags travel as much by day as by night. Down on the flat below a big stag was chasing another with all the assiduity of an angry dog, and at last he hunted his enemy right off the low ground up to the bog round Loch Tilt, where I could still see the hunt going on a mile and a half away.

The ground about Loch Tilt had not been visited for a fortnight, and as the mist was lifting and several stags were roaring there I got up to resume my journey. The moment, however, I assumed an upright position I saw a vision of horns round a shoulder directly below me. Four large points on one top meant something out of the way, so I got into position at once to fire as soon as the beast appeared. Soon he came on, feeding quietly, and gave me an easy broadside at sixty yards. He fell at once to the shot, and then turned over and rolled from the top of the hill to the bottom, a distance of about 400 feet. There being no rocks to cause damage, the horns were not injured. I now climbed down quickly, expecting to find I had shot at least a royal, but alas, though the horns were thick and long and the head a very good one, the points only showed eleven with four on the left top. It was rather unusual to find an adult stag at this season feeding so eagerly, but I have noticed it once or twice before, and think that there are always a few stags which never go with hinds nor have the courage to fight for them. These stags invariably keep apart from turmoil in the rutting season, and in consequence almost invariably have

good heads. In this instance the stomach of the stag was crammed full of reindeer moss (*Cladifer rangiferina*), and not a blade of grass was to be seen.

After lunch I went to the flats west of Loch Tilt and spied the ground carefully. Five stags were there with small groups of hinds, but not seeing anything better than a wide nine-pointer, I re-crossed the burn and made for the rising slopes above Geal-na-Caillich Buidhe, where stags were calling in all directions.

So numerous are the deer on this ground at this season that it is extremely difficult to progress without moving some of them. Though it makes stalking the more interesting, it is, nevertheless, a matter of patience and time to get within range of any particular beast the stalker desires, and often one false move will set the whole mass of deer moving up to the open slopes above, from which they can view all approaches.

An hour spent in careful search of the whole ground revealed one ten-pointer with long and wide-spread horns, certainly one of the best heads I had seen this season. He occupied a central position with his hinds, whilst three other large bodies of deer guarded the flanks on either side. By carefully surveying the ground I saw that there was just one possible line of advance up a burn, but even this ended in an open marsh, beyond which I could not see from my present position any chance of getting nearer than 400 yards.

Time was now advancing, so, after a very slow and careful crawl, I worked uphill towards the deer in the bed of the burn itself. Many of the hinds

on all the line of ridges ahead were lying and watching below, and I was often in full view, but at last I reached the rounded hillock in front of the marsh and found I could go no further. It was a case of waiting for the deer to move into a better position (which seemed most unlikely), or taking a shot at 400 yards. Two hours went by, and the deer rose and began to feed, but not to move over the ridge, so I decided to try the shot. The light was bad, as the sun was setting behind the deer, and I was not surprised when I saw the bullet cut the peat beneath the stag.

After this all the deer at once moved upwards to the open slopes, and again I could not advance nearer than 500 yards, so I showed myself to put them over the ridge, and saw them break into several lots just as it began to get dark.

I now made for the path for home, and suddenly, hearing a stag roaring just in front of me, not half a mile from the Lodge, decided that if I could see him he should die. Deer were moving everywhere up on the shoulder to my right, but apparently the roaring stag and his hinds, who were in a hollow, had not seen them, so when I looked down on the small party they were quite quiet. The stag gave me an easy chance at 100 yards and fell to a heart-shot after running a few yards. He was a big seven-pointer with very thick horns.

Thus ended my stalking for 1918. In twelve days' stalking I had shot eleven stags, of which six had heads worth taking home. This is a much higher percentage than usually occurs. In stalking for thirty-five years in Highland forests I have always counted myself lucky if I got one good head